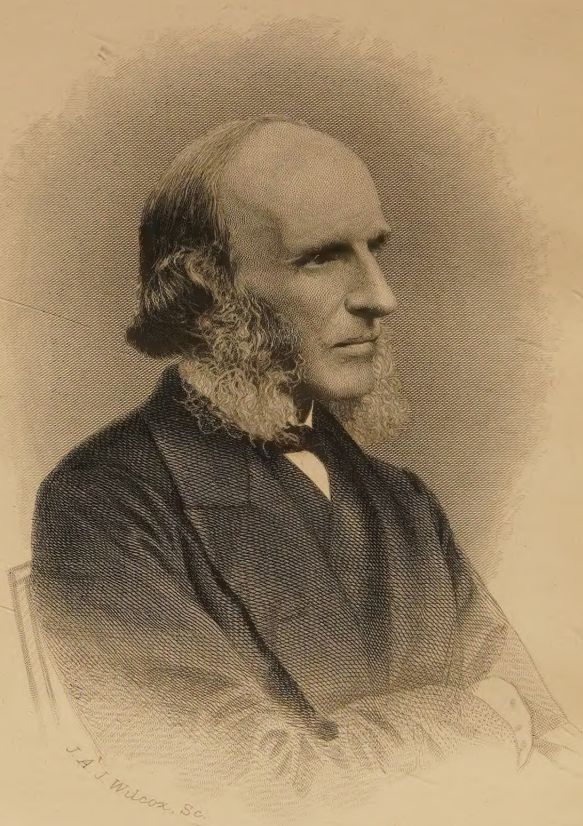


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J. A. J. Wilcox, Sc.

MEMOIR
OF
WILLIAM HENRY CHANNING

BY
OCTAVIUS BROOKS FROTHINGHAM



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MEMOIR OF W. H. CHANNING.

I.

THE AGE AND ITS CHILD.

MR. EMERSON, in his lecture on "Man the Reformer," said, "In the history of the world the doctrine of reform had never such scope as at the present hour. . . . Now all things hear the trumpet, and must rush to judgment, — Christianity, the laws, commerce, schools, the farm, the laboratory ; and not a kingdom, town, statute, rite, calling, man, or woman, but is threatened by the new spirit."

The generation was, indeed, remarkable. Whether the wave of enthusiasm that swept over Europe had reached New England and caused the moral temperature in that excitable region to rise, or whether causes that had long been working at home combined to produce a social revolution, cannot be discovered. At all events, the interest in social reconstruction can be accounted for without having recourse to foreign interference. Puritanism had created an intense earnestness in the human soul, and led to a burning compassion. Its zeal for doctrine, founded on spiritual experience, was accompanied by an immense practical concern for the mortal condition, and might, of itself, have resulted directly in attempts at ameliorating essentially the lot of man. The famous Samuel Hop-

kins, best known as the author of a "System of Theology," as early as 1773, in Newport, R. I., the birth-place of William E. Channing, formed a plan for recovering Africa and colonizing it with freed negroes from the United States. His preaching, writings, letters, had such effect that in 1774 a law was passed forbidding the importation of negroes into the colony, and ten years later the legislature decreed that all the children born in slavery after the following March should be declared free. But every approach towards dogmatical disintegration hastened the moral tendency. The theological discontent that had been fermenting for two generations broke out in 1815. At the ordination of Jared Sparks in Baltimore, 1819, Channing defined Unitarianism. From that time zeal ran in two opposite directions. The "orthodox" bent their energies to save the individual soul through revivals of religious sentiment. The "liberals" encouraged freedom of thought, scholarship, criticism, philosophy, literature, education, and whatever is made for the emancipation of men. The drift in the one case was towards spiritualism, in the other towards secularism. The one party tried to get people well out of the world, the contending party tried to make this world happier for people.

William Ellery Channing was leader of the latter company. His interest in the slave, the workingman, the inebriate, the poor, the ignorant, the disfranchised of every class, is well known. While holding fast to Christianity, an impassioned believer in divine influence, a devout disciple of Jesus, an ardent upholder of the religious nature of man, almost a mystic in his aspiration towards God, he was more and more persuaded of the necessity of loosing every fetter that

bound the human body and limited the human mind. Liberalism and socialism seem to go together. The Polish Unitarians of the seventeenth century were exceedingly radical. The learned and pious Gregory Pauli advocated a community of goods, and was of opinion that Christians should neither bear arms nor accept civil offices. John Niemojewski resigned his post as judge of the district of Cracow, from conscientious scruples about taking or exacting oaths. Martin Czechowicius held views respecting worldly authorities that would be regarded as dangerous now. He recommended a refusal of obedience to laws when they commanded actions contrary to the word of God; and, besides approving of withdrawal from civil functions, appears to have been a peace-man of non-resistant principles. Peter Gonesius cast ridicule on the war spirit by going about with a wooden sword by his side.

The controversial period lasted about twenty years, — say from 1815 to 1835; and a contributor to the "Present," 1843, discovered signs that Unitarianism had done its work, while a writer in the "Christian Examiner" for November, 1858, announced the inadequacy of the old-fashioned faith to meet the demands of the age. But the dissatisfaction with doctrinal efforts was confessed long before the earliest of these dates. The letter which George Ripley addressed to his society in 1840 proves that the advance column of the "liberals" had already entered into the region of socialism. The experiment of Brook Farm was the fruit of conversations in which Dr. Channing had taken a leading part, and the establishment of the "Dial" received encouragement from him. In a paper printed in the "Dial," July, 1842, on the "Con-

vention of Friends of Universal Reform," Mr. Emerson described a meeting of "progressive" minds, at which eminent Unitarians were present. All eyes were turned upward to see the holy city descending from the skies to the earth. The coming of the Son of Man in glory was expected. The kingdom of heaven did not come without observation. Men cried, "Lo here! lo there!" Some looked for the regeneration of the world through vegetarianism, some through phrenology, some through mesmerism. Much was anticipated from education, much from liberty of religious speculation. All apparently believed in the transforming virtue of a return to nature. Conventionalism was a bugbear. The removal of obstacles to the flow of the Spirit was demanded; and among the obstacles, in the estimation of a number, were money, luxury, wheaten bread, the Sabbath, the priesthood, the separation between rich and poor, the moral inequality of mankind. The more moderate clung to the necessity of supernatural influences to inspire, direct, impel energy, and enable the soul to rise superior to circumstances. A fresh spiritual afflatus was called for by Channing, Emerson, and the originators of the transcendental movement, but even these felt the importance of a new arrangement of terrestrial conditions in accordance with a pure gospel. Idealism rose to the height of a religion. It was enthusiastic, buoyant, believing, aspiring, full of the Holy Ghost. Socialism was a gospel, a literal inference from the New Testament, the Word made Flesh, the true incarnation of the Supreme.

Into this new world of thought William Henry Channing was born, May 25, 1810, in Boston, the centre of every movement in intellectual and spiritual

life, at that time full of the germs of a surprising moral activity. His father, Francis Dana Channing, whose only son he was, a lawyer, following the profession of his father, a graduate of Harvard College, in the class of 1794, was the eldest of four brothers, three of whom became distinguished: William Ellery, the famous preacher, born in Newport, 1780; Walter, born in 1786; Edward Tyrrell, born in 1790. The father died in 1810, the year of his son's birth, leaving a wife, Susan, daughter of Stephen Higginson, member of the Continental Congress of 1783, and a conspicuous Federalist, and two daughters, both cultivated women, one of whom married Dr. Francis J. Higginson, her cousin. The nurture of William Henry thus devolved on his mother, a remarkable woman, of unusual strength of character, singular mental activity, and fine presence. The relation between mother and son was very close as long as she lived, and probably did much to deepen that respect for the sex which was one of his prominent traits. His connection both on the father's side and on the mother's accounts for his intellectual as well as his social qualities. Francis Dana Channing was reputed the ablest of the brothers, though this, perhaps, was due to the fact that his promise was not fulfilled, that his performance was left to the imagination, while his only son was more brilliant than any of his cousins, had the elements of genius, indeed, in greater profusion than his famous uncle. Through his father, William Henry was allied with the eminent families of Gibbs and Ellery in Rhode Island, and with those of R. H. Dana and Washington Allston in Massachusetts. Through his mother he was connected with the Cabots, Clevelands, Jacksons, Lees,

Lowells, Perkinses, the best stock in New England, whether we consider blood or brains. He came rightly by his love of art, literature, language, for, to say nothing of his mother's careful training, the intellectual passion of his family took this direction. His celebrated uncle, William Ellery, had a decided literary and poetical bent. Walter, the physician, wrote occasional pieces in prose and verse, was a member of several literary as well as scientific societies, and was a student of art; was, some thought, better constituted for success as a writer than as a lecturer on medical subjects. Edward Tyrrell, besides being editor of the "North American Review" and a frequent contributor to its pages, was for more than thirty years professor of rhetoric and oratory at Harvard, forming the taste of a generation of students, and doing as much as any man to create an American literature. A certain enthusiasm for humanity belonged to all the brothers. Unitarianism, whether of the old school or of the new, took on this complexion. The brothers Channing had an unusual share of this beneficent spirit, even the most scholastic among them, Edward, being known for his charity as well as his cultivation; though, of course, the disposition was most marked in the one who adopted the clerical profession, and committed himself to the philanthropic aspect of society. The humane character of his ministry was largely due to this strong family trait, which led him to take a deep interest in the temporal condition of his fellow-man. He was a devotee of liberty, as intuitive men usually are, and a devout believer in a living God, as every clergyman must be. As a rule, the clergyman is an idealist and a reformer, though his notions of idealism and of reform may be neither

comprehensive nor consistent. An educated man and a "liberal," as William Ellery Channing was, carried out to their conclusion both tendencies, rendering him at once a worshiper and a worker, a philosophical theist and an ardent friend of human brotherhood, a patient thinker and a man of brave philanthropy. His singular power of calm reflection concealed from the ordinary view a natural impetuosity of temperament, and his enforced circumspection made his passion for liberty seem cold, but he rendered illustrious the vital idealism and the sturdy beneficence of his family, to which his profession gave a cast of devout intensity that rendered him a poet as well as a prophet. His enthusiasm for personal freedom was courageous and consistent, though it was so tempered with thought that they who lived in feeling alone could not do full justice to it. He was tolerant of intolerance, patient with fanaticism, generous towards disbelief, large in his appreciation of tendencies, always keeping the interests of mankind in view.

His nephew had all the fire, all the impulse, all the sensibility, all the devotion to humanity, all the soaring aspiration, but was somewhat lacking in that disposition to cautious reserve and consideration which distinguished his famous relative. He was born into a later generation, when causes were less new, and there was more call for eloquent speech than for still, closet meditation. Unitarianism was taking wings; social reform had avowed prophets and advocates; abolition, temperance, the claims of labor, had champions, and needed an inspirer rather than a counselor. Well I remember, about 1840-5, the fervent apostle of every humane idea, as he stood radiant and enchanting on reform platforms, and fascinated all hear-

ers by his ringing voice, his buoyant mien, his rapt countenance, and his glowing appeals. He seemed then the most seraphic of all the orators, though Wendell Phillips spoke at the same time. The latter was more keen and trenchant, but Mr. Channing was more electrifying. Phillips was a gleam of light, but his friend was an uncreated beam; the effulgence that, according to the book of Genesis, preceded the sun. As has been finely said, he was like an electric blaze among gas lamps. One of Mr. Phillips' arguments I recall now; the warmth of Channing's utterance lingers lovingly about the heart, but all except the glory is departed. He was an atmosphere, life-giving but impalpable.

His autobiography, which lies in fragments before me, has this brilliant, imaginative, tantalizing quality. Little or nothing can be carried away from it. The record was not begun until he was long past middle life, considerably older than sixty, — when his memory was blurred and his native predisposition to symbolism, allegory, fanciful interpretation, was confirmed, — and was finally arranged in 1884, but a few months before he died. It is, at best, a bare, outline sketch, recast again and again, consisting of titles to books and heads of chapters, with divisions, subdivisions, episodes, the whole being preceded by mottoes from Marcus Aurelius, Seneca, Socrates, the Bible, Emerson, Angelus Silesius (or some other mystical writer whose maxims struck him); a sort of poem, pæan, rhapsody, beginning with praise and closing with benediction, valuable as an expression of the spirit of a life rather than as a mine of information. The titles are fanciful: "Youth's Springtime," "Summer Ripening," "Autumn Garner," "Winter Sunset," "The Dawn,"

"Sunrise," "Noon," "Sunset," "The Temple-Gates," "The Academy and Studio," "The Judgment Hall," "The Palace and Throne," "The Mount of Vision," "Fore-Gleams," "After-Glow," "Eden," "Evening Resting Place," "The Dark Valley," "Ideal-Realism and Real-Idealism." Each book is to have five chapters. Each chapter is to have five sections. A symmetrical arrangement rules throughout. Every incident, character, phase of thought, passage of experience, has its appropriate place in this comprehensive scheme of biography which represents a complete drama of the spiritual life. The writer felt extraordinary aversion to filling out a conception that was in his mind, and he evidently amused himself with recasting his materials. He did, however, make a beginning. The following account of his ancestors is taken partly from the autobiography and partly from a long letter written in 1878. The description of his grandparents is copied from the letter. Mr. Channing was proud of his fore-runners, as he had good reason to be; for though in many respects unlike them, as he belonged to another period, he was in all essential qualities of enthusiasm, independence, self-reliance, courage, devotion to what he considered the welfare of society, their true descendant.

Let me first of all describe my grandfather. He must at the period when he first rises on my memory have been between sixty and seventy years of age, and, owing doubtless to the fact that, following the universal fashion of gentlemen of his position in that period, he wore his gray hair powdered, he was to me the type of all that was most ancient and venerable. His imposing figure, air, and manner filled me with ever new admiration, as, clothed in entire black, with his snowy locks and queue, and his ruffled wristbands

and shirt bosom, white cravat above, and tightly buttoned gaiters or buckled shoes below, with broad-brimmed hat and gold-headed cane, he descended the door-steps to enter his carriage. This carriage, one of the large, brightly ornamented, highly polished style then in vogue, with a lofty cushioned box seat for the coachman and platform behind for the footman, had been built in England, whence my grandfather had lately returned, and was, I presume, of very much the same pattern as thousands which are seen every day in all European and American cities. But it affected my imagination then as a princely equipage. So as all boys are wont to fancy, my grandfather appeared to me the peer of the noblest. And still more stately and elegant was he to my imagination when attired in full costume to receive his guests at dinner or evening parties in his own house. Such was my grandfather when prepared to take his place in society. But the daily morning preparation for this grand display was an ever new mystery, which was watched with curious delight. He came down to the breakfast-room in a long white woolen wrapper belted around the middle, always greeting us little folk with a benignant smile, and entertaining us during the meal by pleasant sallies, droll stories, and small talk, chatting between whiles with his wife or my mother, as he sipped his chocolate or coffee and read his newspaper. And then came the chief mysteries of the toilet. His mirror, razors, hot water, napkins, etc., were brought in by his man-servant, and placed in full light; for my grandfather always chose to shave himself. The process was deliberate and solemn, for he was very precise and neat. And then came the time for my grandmother's skillful manipulations. The large japanned-box, with powder puffs, brushes and combs, etc., was opened, a large clean napkin was spread over the shoulders of my grandfather, the ribbon of the queue was unrolled, shaken, and smoothed, the locks were carefully brushed out, the powder used on the previous day was carefully removed, the forehead was

cleansed with a sponge, and then the readjustment began. The hair was carefully brushed back over the head and behind the ears, though not so tight as to be flat, but rather loosely, and then neatly bound into a queue. Then the powder puff was profusely used ; a half moon of pure white was marked upon the summit of the forehead in front of the hair. Next the napkin round the shoulders was removed, and a fresh white cravat with long lapels was folded and skillfully tied around the neck. So much for the upper part of the person. Next came the serious work of making ready the nether limbs. These were the days of small-clothes and long hose, which varied in thickness according to the season. In the winter time or inclement weather my grandfather wore woollen gaiters buttoning up to the knee, but in the summer or in fine weather he wore black silk stockings, or in very hot weather white. But it was a lengthened performance to tie down the drawers, to pull up with perfect smoothness, leaving no possible wrinkle, the stockings, to garter them tightly above the knee, to arrange the breeches neatly over them and button them tight, and then to fasten on the gaiters or the buckled shoes, according to the weather. And then my grandsire proceeded up-stairs to complete his equipment, to don his low-hung waistcoat and broad-skirted coat. Certainly, the style of those old days was very imposing in effect, but it involved a singular amount of time, trouble, and inconvenience, which in these more careless days is avoided. But dress then was still a fine art, and demanded considerate thought, as a chief duty of social etiquette.

But this lingering upon external details is doing my revered ancestor great injustice if it leaves on the mind of any reader an impression that he was in the least degree ostentatious or foppish. No one could be more utterly free from such folly. He simply felt that it was a part of self-respect, as of mutual respect, to be scrupulously neat, refined, and elegant. In truth, my grandfather was a singu-

larly manly, energetic, sensible, well-balanced, sagacious man of business, prudent and practical, prompt and energetic, full of enterprise yet conscientious and cautious. Engaged in large transactions in copartnership with his sons, he had been singularly successful until the difficulties between Great Britain and France; the Berlin and Milan decrees, and the American Embargo, embarrassed his affairs as they did then gall New Englanders engaged in commerce. How he and his firm suffered I, of course, was quite too young to form the least notion, and have never inquired since. Certainly, to all appearance he was living entirely at his ease and in prosperity, with his town and country house, horses and carriages, and hospitable welcome for all constant visitors and guests. Though now in his old age, intrusting the more active offices of the firm and their extensive correspondence to his partners and their clerks, so far as memory serves, my grandfather went regularly every day to his place of business and to the Exchange.

Early I became aware also that my grandfather had been and still was an active and influential politician, enlisted with intense earnestness of conviction and not a little passion and prejudice and determined will upon the Federal side. He had long been one of the so-called Essex Junto; had fervently supported Washington and been appointed by him as naval commissioner for Boston; was in close correspondence with Timothy Pickering; sat constantly in counsel with George Cabot, Josiah Quincy, Harrison Gray Otis, and their compeers; supported Fisher Ames, as the most trustworthy orator and expounder of their party; stood firmly by Governor Strong, admired Hamilton and Jay, detested Jefferson and the Democrats, hated Bonaparte, dreaded French plots, confided implicitly in true republicanism, wished for cordial alliance with Great Britain; in a word, was a thorough-going, uncompromising, ardent, steadfast Federalist, and as such a zealous and devoted patriot in every fibre of his frame.

He was, moreover, a very powerful and effective writer in the public press, and under his well-known signature of "Lacon" had dealt very heavy blows against the intriguing, half-hearted, double-tongued, and double-dealing political manœuvrers of the time, in a series of articles which, for their vehement indignation and keen satire and vigor of style, have rarely been surpassed. His fireside, therefore, was a centre of earnest discussion of the great practical controversies of the day; and without in the least comprehending the full import of their meaning, my boyish ears drank in and my boyish heart and imagination retained political impressions, which remained unaltered till the widening experiences of life, extended historical reading, and the changed aspect of the political world at home and abroad, gradually modified them. Well do I remember to this day the utter amazement with which, when a boy of some twelve years of age, I heard a gentleman who was visiting my mother hazard the to me extravagantly heretical suggestion, "A Democrat may be honest in his convictions." In my grandfather's day and home such a remark would have been deemed treason, and would have branded the person who made it as untrustworthy. On the whole, it was a healthful stimulation to a child's intellectual power of discernment, honorable feeling, and patriotic devotion to great practical principles inculcated by such men as my grandfather and George Cabot and Henry Lee, and the many men of mark whom he gathered round him as his guests; and as all my relatives on my father's side, as well as on my mother's, were zealous and uncompromising Federalists, my whole form of thought and feeling took from the first a highly conservative and aristocratic form.

These practical associations and convictions, which unconsciously framed the osseous and muscular system of my character were rounded out and completed by the social influences spread around me by my grandmother, — an Englishwoman by birth and breeding, married to my

grandfather in his widowhood, many years after the death of my mother's mother. A lover of the world and fashionable society and a staunch Churchwoman, her visitors, too, gentlewomen of high-bred manners, elegant and stately appearance, she gave me a standard of courtesy which wide-extended observation and experience through many lands has but slightly enlarged or enriched. The true nobility of all ages and nations treat one another in nearly the same style, with a blended self-respect and mutual reverence, dignified reserve and graceful ease, ready sympathy and guarded self-possession, cheerful good humor and frank simplicity, all combining to form a harmonious whole which the saintly sages of the central kingdom well named urbanity.

There were occasionally two visitors of a different stamp, excellent ladies, who had seen better days and were now fallen under the cloud of misfortune, through whose softened eyes, subdued tones, and modest demeanor, breathed a pathetic minor key, like an æolian harp. And two most venerable dames, dressed always precisely like one another to a pin, in brown silk, with tightly fitting caps and starched neckerchiefs, the daughters of a very celebrated and eccentric doctor of divinity, with soft little voices and sweet smiles, used to affect my boyish fancy, as if two old-fashioned family portraits had suddenly started to conscious life, and had stepped down from their frames. My grandmother was of most hospitable temper, and a scrupulously neat housekeeper. Her Christmas dinners for aunts, uncles, and cousins, some twoscore in number, were festivals to be looked forward to and remembered for weeks. And every evening, tea, with buttered bread in thin rolls and crisp cocoa-nut cakes and gingerbread, was handed round by the man servant and maid with great ceremony.

Previous to this, however, had been the grand sight for the children of building up the huge wood-fire in the generous chimney. My grandfather then had wakened from the long cozy nap which he took every afternoon in his

comfortable arm-chair before the fire-place. The servant brought in the ample "leather" filled with logs of wood. The high polished brass andirons were drawn back, with a large iron shovel the live coals of the declining fire had been raked forward, and then amid the still warm ashes was deposited the huge back-log of hard wood; upon this was placed the back-stick, then the fore-stick, some light and easily kindling wood inserted between them; upon these were piled the glowing embers, and over them, so laid as to leave interstices for the draught, were reared smaller logs and sticks, then the remainder of the red coals opened beneath the fore-sticks, and the work thus scientifically and artistically finished. The result was a glorious blaze that warmed with cheery ruddiness the walls and ceiling darkling in the twilight, and filled all hearts with the sense of good cheer, as the snow-storm was seen sweeping or the rain falling in the streets, ere the shutters were closed and the curtains drawn; and then came the magic hour for stories, as, gathering my sisters and myself on stools or small chairs around her, was opened for us the world of fairy romance. Later on came in uncles, aunts, neighbors, and visitors, to chat over the news, or discuss the politics of the day, or to join in games of whist, checkers, dominoes, ending with a snug supper at nine o'clock. Altogether, my impressions of those times are of most cordial, cheerful friendliness and open-handed hospitality. It was a singular contrast to leave behind Mount Vernon with its genial festivities to pass the Sunday always, and often the Saturday, with my grandmother Channing, my uncle William, and my other uncles and aunts in the parsonage of Federal Street, where all was so simple, quiet, and plain. My grandmother was mirthful and witty, loved her grandchildren dearly, and rejoiced to welcome them; and nothing could have been kinder than all my aunts and uncles. They were jovial, free-spoken, fond of humor, keen at retort in the family circle, and much laughter intermingled with

their earnest discussions. Still, the mere sense that this was the parsonage, the recollection that the beloved saintly brother was engaged in his study above, or gone out upon his pastoral round, and might at any time appear either from his books or his visits, gave a certain sedate gravity to the manners of the family circle. And under the commanding charm of his presence, and without any wish on his part to curb hilarity, tones became subdued, and movements more tranquil, and mild pleasantry took the place of hearty mirth. He was far removed, however, from austerity, sadness, or depression, and he greatly enjoyed the good laugh and sharp-shooting of raillery and badinage, indulging in occasional sallies himself. But gossip and personalities he disliked, slander he detested and would never permit, and of intolerance of all kinds he was sternly intolerant; ever remonstrating against hard judgments and harsh words, and always striving to lift the conversation to the high levels of genuine principles and worthy interests. It was a great privilege, sometimes, on a Saturday afternoon, to ascend with my uncle to his study, to look over his illustrated books, and listen to his instructive descriptions and narratives; and if I had been his son by birth, as after his brother's death his orphaned boy was in spirit by adoption, he could not have been more tenderly loving. Never can the impression of his gracious patience and his gentle consideration and open-hearted confidentialness be forgotten. His courtesy to children was angelic. My grandmother in her way was a most bountiful hostess, and as my grandmother Higginson's great festival day was Christmas, so for my grandmother Channing the grand family gathering and feast was the annual Thanksgiving, when all the sons and daughters, and, as years passed on, their wives and husbands and children, assembled around the family board. At the time to which my memory now goes back, however, my sisters and myself were as yet the only grandchildren, and as the descendants of their adored and so fervently

mourned elder brother we were recipients of the hoarded tenderness, sanctified by his memory and blessed influence."

The account of his father and mother shall also be given in his own language, taken partly from the autobiography, and partly from the long letter written to his daughter. His words may seem excessive, but the whole is a good example of his style, while the descriptions do not seem to be overdrawn, for in this case the general testimony corroborates affection. The father was a remarkable man. The mother was a woman of singular force of character and great sweetness of disposition, religious to a wonderful degree, susceptible to all moral beauty, and devoted to the highest purposes of life. As a girl she was sensitive, affectionate, thoughtful, intellectual. She read the deepest books, — Seneca's "Morals," Juvenal, "Orlando Furioso," Johnson, Goldsmith, Russell's "Modern Europe," Milton, Shakespeare, Pope's "Iliad," "Letters for Literary Ladies," "Modern Philosophers," — studied the art of composition, loved art, scenery, flowers, enjoyed nature intensely, was keenly alive to the pleasures of friendship. Her craving, however, was for spiritual food. The following letter to her friend, Miss Searle, on the occasion of her engagement, is deliciously proper : —

BROOKLINE, *August 26, 1805.*

And so, my dear Fanny, it goes rather against your feelings, does it, to be obliged to wish me joy on the acquisition of a new friend. I thought you knew me better than for a moment to suppose that the admission of another affection must prove the death of any old one. If I were now but fifteen such an idea might be natural, but the romantic and enthusiastic attachment felt at that age can never be expe-

rienced by a woman of *two and twenty*. Sober reason then begins to take the place of the bright visions of fancy, and so we wake from the dreamy and sweet delusions of youthful imagination to — I had almost said the sad reality of things. But this savors of ingratitude to the beneficent Author of our being; and I, surrounded by every blessing which the world can give, should be the last to utter a complaint. Indeed, I do not mean to do so. I am perfectly satisfied with my portion of good things, and am of opinion that there is more enjoyment than suffering in the aggregate. Yet I have not so far advanced in wisdom and rationality as to be able to look back without something very like regret to the fair pictures of life which my fancy drew ere observation or experience had taught me to reflect that pain must be mixed with pleasure, and evil with good.

I used to think myself remarkably free from romantic ideas; but in the bitterness of my disappointment I have learned the fallacy of my expectations. I have discovered that I neither judged rightly of myself or my friends. In myself I have unveiled faults which I should blush to acknowledge; and some whom I had fancied all perfection I find to be frail and fallible. The last three years of my life have made a total change in my sentiments and feelings, I hope for the better. But finding my inability to judge correctly and consistently without assistance, I have chosen a friend I think well qualified to cheer me in a world often gloomy, and direct me in mazes often perplexed.

I think when you know *this my guide*, you will confess that I have for once judged well, and will give your perfect approbation to my choice. If I am not greatly blinded by partiality (and *I do not think I am*, for this has been my *opinion for years*) this young man unites more desirable qualities than any one I have ever known. He has talents without vanity, learning without pedantry, cheer-

fulness without levity, and devotion without fanaticism. A disposition sanguine and ardent and a gloomy imagination gave him in early youth the appearance of being eccentric and visionary; but religion has sobered his views and regulated his feelings. And I can with pride and confidence look up to him as my counselor in all difficulties, as my support in affliction, as the partner of all my pleasures and sharer of all my cares, in the full belief that he will ever promote my best interests with the zeal of true affection.

Here is a sketch of herself, given to the same friend in 1818:—

When I was young I was often called haughty and conceited, and if I have any knowledge of human nature, and am not deceived by self-love, a little more vanity, by making me more sure of pleasing, would have changed this appearance into ease and unconcern, which often passes for indifference when it is rather to be attributed to confidence and perfect self-possession.

But to return to the son's recollections, which are remarkably distinct, and are confirmed by all we can ascertain through letters. It is unnecessary to enter into all the details of the family connections, which on both sides were numerous and complicated from marriages and intermarriages. This is a memoir of William H. Channing, and whatever does not bear directly on his character and destiny is excluded as being irrelevant, however interesting in itself. It is enough to know that behind him lay great moral forces, high purposes, traditions of faith and hope, ardent aspirations after excellence, lofty ideals of good, noble intellectual standards, warm interest in the political ideas of the period, a habit of taking part in the social welfare, high-toned concern for the

public advantage. A love of art, music, natural loveliness, was in the family. Richard H. Dana contributed his poetic fervor, Washington Allston his fine perception of ideal beauty. There was nothing mean or base in the materials of which the disposition was made, while from every side streamed in influences that were stimulating to the intellect, the conscience, and the soul.

My father, Francis Dana Channing, born amidst the throes of the War for Independence, in May, 1775, was the eldest son of William Channing and Lucy Ellery, both of Newport. And he evidently inherited the loving and gentle temperament of his father, blended with the bright wit and sound practical judgment of his mother. By universal testimony, as transmitted through his brothers and sisters and many friends, Francis was a singularly charming and attractive youth from his earliest years. Tall, lithe, and full of vital energy, with finely cut features and graceful form, he was characterized by a beaming radiance of expression, geniality of manner, frank directness of speech, generous enthusiasm, a cheerful gayety, and winning sweetness, which combined to make him a favorite alike with old and young. His grandfather, William Ellery, signer of the Declaration of Independence, then member of Congress from Rhode Island, and afterwards Collector of the Customs in Newport, from the first treated him with a fond familiarity that gained his confidence, and bound them in a friendship ever deepening. He early became the trusted companion of his parents in their care of the younger children. And with them he was the idol of admiring affection. "My brother Francis," his sister Lucy used to say, "from the time I can first remember his mere entrance into a room, was like an influx of sunshine and spring breezes through an open door."

Trained in the best school of Newport, where his brother

William was afterward educated, Francis was early fitted for entrance into Harvard College, Cambridge, Mass., whither he was sent at the age of fifteen in 1790, and at once took a position in his class, and became a resident also in the family of his uncle, whose name he bore, — Chief Justice Francis Dana, whose spacious mansion, situated on a hill, then commanding a wide outlook across the valley and meadows of the river Charles, from Mount Auburn on the west, with its verdant groves, and the green rounded summits of Brighton and Brookline, to the Blue Hills of Milton on the horizon, was but a short half mile's walk from the college. Here the refining social influences, intellectual tastes, and brilliant conversation of the high-toned society to which he was admitted as an inmate, rounded out and fitly completed his means of culture. A laudatory note from his uncle, speaking in warm terms of approval of his progress in collegiate studies and his agreeable manners, called out from his father a long letter to Francis, from which the following extracts will best illustrate their mutual relationship. Through the stately formalities customary to the period, indicating a style of manners dignified by reverence often forgotten now, the proud love of his parents shines out. "We have been gratified to learn of the satisfaction you derive from the prosecution of your studies. Go on, my son, and as an additional incentive be assured that your parents participate with you in all that can promote your happiness. Perhaps no young gentleman of your age was ever blessed with greater advantages. From this circumstance your friends and acquaintances expect much from you, and from your past exertions and good conduct I am persuaded that you will not disappoint them. We frequently converse of our son, and are always happy to hear from him. My own pressing business engagements" — for at this time the father was Attorney-General of Rhode Island, and one of the leading lawyers of his State — "have left me little leisure to write. But I have desired

your sisters and cousins not to neglect you. I had intended to be with you at the meeting of the Supreme Court in Boston. But our own assembly and courts will be in session at the same time. I can leave my business, however, next month, and if the weather should be favorable you will see your papa in Cambridge. Remember me with affectionate regards to all who are friendly to your affectionate parent."

And in similar stately style, though overflowing with affection and tenderness, the son thus refers to a visit lately made to his beloved relations: "Honored parent, no one visits home more pleased than myself. With gladness the scenes of my youth are reviewed. As I approach the house each mark that tells me of my nearness to the door is grateful to the eye. When I turn the well-known handle, and the lock clicks, my bosom beats with unwonted throbs. But when unexpectedly I enter the room and see you all surrounding the fire, and am cheered by the joy manifested by my return, when your friendly salutations vibrate in my ears, when I behold health beaming on your cheeks, and give and receive the cordial embrace, inexpressible delight fills me with new life. Then do I feel blessed indeed in the presence of my nearest and dearest, with you, my parents, my amiable Ann, my little brothers and sisters; and when I see them all made happy by the slight attentions I can pay them, then do I feel that I am good for something, and am grateful that you welcome my return. . . . I reflect with the greatest satisfaction on the affectionate regard and generosity which you manifest to me, and behold each moment of existence rendered pleasant by your kindness. So many are the comforts received from your hands, so countless are the marks of parental fondness, that I would not desire more without seeming ingratitude for what I already so enjoy. How fortunate am I to be thus blessed with guardian angels to direct my course! . . . Will you present my best regards to all relatives and friends, and may you, my parents, be happy in everything around you. Thus wishes your affectionate and dutiful son. — F. D. C."

Thus brightly passed three happy years, amidst prosperity and every outward sign of promise. But a heavy gloom was suddenly to overspread the sunny skies. In the very letter, already quoted, from his father, pathetic premonition of coming sorrow shows its head upon the horizon, in the following words : " Let me request, that while in dress, etc., you appear decently and properly, as becomes your position, you yet pay due attention to the principle of economy in all your expenditures, and guard against the extravagance to which persons of your age and in your situation are so much exposed. Always remember that your brothers and sisters have an equal claim with you on my assistance, and that an event may take place at an earlier period than you or they expect, which will deprive them of that aid." And now the cloud thus dimly foreshadowed suddenly overspread their firmament. For in the very summer noontide of his career the husband and father who had shed such peace and brightness round him by his serene strength fell ill from overwork. He died, universally lamented, at the early age of forty-two, leaving a widow and nine young children to be provided for out of the small fortune he had as yet acquired. The condition and prospects of the whole family, as well as of himself, were felt with peculiar poignancy of grief by Francis. For it was instantly clear to his conscience and heart that upon him, as the eldest son, must devolve the duty of supplying, as far as within his power, his father's place to his bereaved mother and to his young brothers and sisters. By the advice of his grandfather Ellery, and the judgment and wishes of his mother and uncles, he resolved to complete his course at Harvard, and to help in turn his brothers and sisters to get the best culture at their command. He was then in his junior year; and his brother William, five years younger, was still preparing for college. A short extract from a letter of the elder to the younger brother will best indicate his feelings and purposes and the tone of their family life : —

CAMBRIDGE, 1793.

Oh my brother ! My heart is darkened with the gloom of that forsaken house, — forsaken by its friendly master ! Each returning hour of wished-for solitude is but a series of painful reflections. I retrace the scenes of former joys, contrast them with the present cheerless, dreary void, and sigh with vain regrets. But let us remember, while absorbed with grief, that our distresses are but blessings in disguise. Conscious that there is no relief from the transports of our present sorrow, let me recommend you to put confidence in the Father of us all, and to strive to regain fortitude. . . . Your goodness of heart will remind you that if you err, you have now only a parent unable to protect, too tender to chide, and who can only shed over you the tears of maternal sympathy. May your thoughts withhold you from awakening the throbs of her tender anxiety, and keep you evermore desirous to liberate our mother from her cares. As long as you may tarry at home, pass with dear mamma all the moments which you can steal from necessary studies and healthful recreations. And in return for the many unrequitable tendernesses which we have received from her, let kind attentions and filial affection be ever the tribute from her much-loved children. Your sisters and brothers all esteem you for your friendly dispositions. May you ever preserve their regard by increased attentions, and retain the esteem which your good qualities have gained. Yes, William ! I feel for you all the warmth of friendship, blended with fraternal love. You are happy in possessing the good-will of all. I doubt not that harmony will always prevail in a family like ours, that by experience has learned the blessings which arise from an interchange of kind offices. As in prosperity, so even in adversity, may we give one another the cordial embrace of love and soothe the throes of grief by sympathy.

Your affectionate brother.

Thus stimulated by a heightened sense of duty to the full exercise of his powers, Francis devoted himself more than ever to his studies, and attained to the position of peer with the foremost scholars of his class. He delivered an English oration at one of the exhibitions, became a member of the Phi Beta Kappa, and, as being a fine classic scholar, was selected to deliver the Salutatory Oration in Latin on Commencement Day, when his class graduated. Three years later the president of Harvard thus referred in highest terms of commendation to this address : —

CAMBRIDGE. *May 29, 1797.*

SIR, — I remember that when you took your Bachelor's degree you delivered an elegant Latin oration to great acceptance. I should be glad if you would prepare a *Valedictory Oration* in Latin for the ensuing Commencement, when you will be a candidate for the second degree. I am fully satisfied that your appearance again upon the platform would be gratifying to all, as it certainly would be to your sincere friend and servant,

JOSEPH WILLARD.

Thus closed with highest honors his collegiate course ; and at the age of nineteen he returned to Newport to enter upon his preparation for the profession of the law, carrying with him the esteem and admiration of the president and professors of his *Alma Mater*. But also he had been as much beloved by his classmates as by his instructors ; for through his whole career he had been preëminent for the warmth of his friendship.

Notwithstanding the cloud of sorrow which overwhelmed him in the loss of his beloved father and his profound sympathy for his mother's grief and anxieties, in which he so tenderly shared, he yet preserved unbroken his cheerful spirits and genial temper. Evidently he was prominently fond of friendly intercourse with his compeers, was habit-

ually gay-hearted and lively, and threw himself with spirit into the intellectual, political, and social interests of the college world.

Extracts from his letters show how, while cheerful, buoyant with good spirits, and mirthful to the degree of hilarity, Francis Channing was refined in all his tastes and untainted in manners by frivolous folly. Throughout these letters incidentally appears, too, his even impassioned love of familiar intimacies with young ladies, the relatives of his classmates, his partners in the dance or at card parties, and especially with the acquaintances of his sisters, and his cousins and their visitors. With a circle of these, indeed, he appears to have cherished the most confidential friendship alike by frequent association and by correspondence, extending from their intellectual culture to their festive enjoyments, putting him in the relation to them at once of companion, elder brother, and guardian. This will best appear from letters to the special friend of his sister Ann, his cousin, Ruth Gibbs, — in after years the wife of his brother William.

A higher strain of thought and a loftier range of interests are manifested in a correspondence kept up for many years with his grandfather Ellery, who showed at once his sunny wisdom and his large-heartedness by his condescending familiarity to all his grandsons, but especially to the eldest.

But nowhere does the whole character of Francis Channing so freely and harmoniously embody itself in all its fervor of affection, poetic enthusiasm, delicate conscientiousness, and sober judgment as in his frequent, full, and utterly unreserved communications with his brother William, who, though five years his junior, became from the trying period of their father's death more and more the centre of his loving trust and fondest hopes. A large pile of these letters was treasured by Dr. Channing, who frequently in after life bore witness with deep emotion to his

intercourse with his brother during his early manhood, as having exerted the most quickening influence upon the whole development of his moral nature, the shaping of his professional career, and the determination of his happy destiny. "To my brother's blended earnestness and wisdom, his encouragement and aid, am I indebted, under Heaven, for the best of what I am and what I have done. He was to me like a higher, nobler self," said he often to the writer, in confidential hours. This ample correspondence will reveal how the elder brother, who began as a guiding mentor, became more and more a generous peer, and at length an admiring and devoted disciple. A more exquisitely beautiful fraternal fellowship than bound these two magnanimous souls in one is rarely seen. Theirs was truly an ideal brotherhood.

During the few years embraced by this correspondence, important changes had occurred in the history of their family, destined completely to change the condition, opportunities, and prospects of its various members. In 1798 Francis had been admitted to practice as an attorney and counselor in the Court of Assize of Newport, once the Circuit Court of the United States in the District of Rhode Island, and in 1799 he was admitted as an attorney of the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, of which his uncle, the Hon. Francis Dana, Esq., was chief justice, and removed first to Cambridge and then to Boston to enter upon his professional career. In 1802 he received a commission as justice of the peace, which was renewed in 1804. Meanwhile, his brother William, returning from his residence in Virginia, where he had been for nearly two years as domestic tutor in the family of Mr. Randolph, of Richmond, had been elected regent of Harvard College, and in 1803 had become settled as the minister of the Federal Street congregation in Boston. It was then that the two brothers, after mutual consultations and agreements between themselves and their

mother, resolved to transfer their whole family to Boston, and establish them in the parsonage of Federal Street Church.

About this time, it appeared that through the intimate friendships of his brother with the family of Stephen Higginson, Jr., at Brookline and in Boston, Francis first formed the acquaintance, and then was constantly thrown into the society, of the youngest sister of Mr. H., who was destined a few years after to become his bride. And thus we are brought to a sketch of my mother, Susan Cleveland Higginson. She was the child of Stephen Higginson, Esq., of Boston, and Susan Cleveland, of Salem. She was the youngest of four daughters and the ninth in a family of ten children. Her father was at this time a merchant of ample wealth and high social and political position and influence. He had lately removed from his old family residence in Federal Street, which had once been a fashionable portion of the town, and had built for himself and other members of his family a block of four houses in the newly settled part of Boston, on Mount Vernon, near the State House.

His eldest son, Nathaniel, a man of commanding powers and great force of character, had entered the profession of the law, and transferred his fortunes to the State of Pennsylvania, where, soon after his marriage, he died suddenly from fever. The second son, Stephen H., Jr., had followed his father's example by choosing the mercantile career as a sphere for his exuberant activity and genial energy. He had met with easy and rare success, and had grown rapidly rich, and had built for himself an elegant and spacious residence not far from his father's, on the western slope of Mount Vernon, and there lived in a munificent and hospitable style, being as remarkable for his liberal charities and boundless benevolence as for his social refinements. The eldest daughter had married Dudley Tyng, Esq., the well-known writer of legal papers, and had removed to Newburyport, where a large family sprang

up around them, the most distinguished of whom is the eloquent and justly renowned preacher, Rev. Dr. Stephen Higginson Tyng, of New York. The second daughter, the wife of Samuel G. Perkins, Esq., had been quite a belle of Boston, and far famed for her brilliant beauty, her commanding and dignified person, her keen intelligence and eloquent conversational powers. They lived in the house next to her father, and welcomed to their table and their social gatherings the most cultivated and refined people of their town and neighborhood, as well as distinguished strangers from abroad. A son, engaged in business with his father, a singularly generous, gentle-mannered, courteous man, who had married a beautiful and wealthy wife, occupied the third house of the row. And the fourth was reserved for the youngest daughter when she should wed. The other sons were all engaged in trade: one of them, a partner of his father, was established in London; another, a traveler, visited as supercargo and agent foreign lands; while the youngest brother was abroad.

Thus my mother, as the youngest daughter of this large and closely united family group, grew up as the favored child, the pet of her elder brothers and sisters, and her father's pride. Born in 1783, she was at the time when my father first met her about seventeen years of age, and already a centre of loving admiration, for her classic beauty of features, her exceeding grace and elegance, her blended dignity and sweetness, her talent and culture, and lofty purity of aspirations and ideals. Of a smaller stature and less stately presence than her elder admired sister, Mrs. Perkins, by her own friends she was regarded as still more attractive from her gentle graciousness and unpretending simplicity. They were married November 30, 1806, at Trinity Church. He was thirty-one, she twenty-three.

In a letter to his grandfather before his wedding, it is remarkably characteristic of the writer that, after uttering his gratitude to Heaven for the priceless blessing that was

given, he should add the expression of his renewed purposes.

How little, in that hour of happy confidence and high-hearted hope, could he have admitted into his thoughts as a conceivable conjecture that his remarkable grandsire was destined to survive him, and to bewail his premature loss! Well was it for him that he so little foresaw the fate that four short years would bring to him. With brilliant prospects opening all around him, he pressed forward to fulfill the promises here recorded, and success beyond his expectations attended his efforts. Often it has been told me by his compeers, in years gone by, that he held among the young men at the bar in Boston the highest rank, with but few superiors and but two or three who could be regarded as his peers. He was rapidly rising to lucrative practice. Honors and proofs of confidence multiplied upon him. He was elected a member of the legislature from his adopted community. He was invited to deliver a Fourth of July oration, which was printed. He was chosen by the Phi Beta Kappa Society to give their annual oration. He became a member of the Anthology Club, the leading literary party in New England, and was enrolled a writer for their journal.

Most brilliantly opened the future of Mr. Channing and his young bride. Living amidst the large circle of their relatives and friends, all outward conditions blooming with promising prosperity, with their young children bringing animation to their new home, four happy years and more swept swiftly by. But in the spring of their fourth married season suddenly befell a most tragic event. During a business journey in the inclement season among the mountains of Vermont, he was exposed to a severe chill from traveling in the wet and damp, and contracted a disease of the lungs, which rapidly developed into consumption. That fatal disease was then less well understood than it has been since, and the dangerous symptoms of his attack were not

rightly estimated until too late for his relief. During the summer months he visited his old home in Rhode Island, with hope of shaking off the insidious attack, and, deceived by delusive appearances of amendment, he lingered on for weeks and months, without taking the one decisive measure of a foreign voyage, which, if resorted to at an earlier period, might probably have saved his life. But in the autumn finding that he was sinking rather than gaining, and dreading to risk the cold of another winter, it was decided that he and his young wife, accompanied by his cousin, Mary Gibbs, and under the escort of her brother, should sail for a warmer climate. Vessels were comparatively few and voyages infrequent then, owing to the foreign wars and the domestic complications of the time. And it was not until October, therefore, that they could find a passage in the small and inconvenient brig *Liberty*, bound for Rio Janeiro.

From the letter written in 1878:—

The pretty house on Mount Vernon was shut up and closed. The children were scattered: the two little girls to be under the loving charge of wise and faithful friends at Newburyport; the baby boy, with a kind wet-nurse, was left to the tender care of his grandmother Channing; and the young parents, attended by the brother of the wife and a cousin of the husband, took passage in a small brig for Rio Janeiro, about the middle of October. But the vessel proved to be a wretched sailer, and they had started too late in the season. Violent storms broke upon them, and they were rudely tossed and driven for twenty days,—“a dreadful period,” as my mother, not fond of superlatives nor wont to complain, repeatedly calls it. Under such terrible conditions the result was inevitable. Confined to a narrow cabin, rarely able to be lifted on deck in the pure air, the frail invalid always kept up his courage, and speaking words of hopeful good cheer to his young wife, slowly pined away.

The 7th of November, the day before he breathed his last, he felt more comfortable, but it was the last flicker of the expiring lamp. My mother's own words shall tell the sequel.

"About 3 A. M. I heard him speak to my brother, and desire Marshall [their man-servant] to be called. I rose directly, and the moment I went to him became sensible that he could not live many hours. My only wish then was that his sufferings might be short. My prayer was answered! He lived till 2 P. M. only, and suffered less than I could possibly have imagined. I held both his hands when he died, and there was not the least struggle. I could not believe he was gone, till I put my hand to his mouth. Death has lost to me all its horrors. He passed away so quietly, so peaceably, that it seemed only like a sweet sleep. He spoke very little, but I have every reason to believe that he knew he was dying, and felt perfectly resigned and happy. . . . I am more calm and tranquil than you would conceive to be possible, though there are some moments in the day which would be insupportable if long continued. But, in general, I am able to see the hand of God in all this, and to be resigned to bear what He has judged best, and to be thankful for the many blessings yet left. God grant that I may make good use of this affliction! In the sad separation of all that I love, there is abundant time for self-examination. Pray with me, my friend, that this may not be time lost for eternity, but that every future year of my life may prove that I have not been afflicted in vain. I have been writing this through a severe thunder-storm, but I have no alarm from that or anything else now. My brother has a great dread of speaking vessels at sea, lest they should prove to be privateers and take us prisoners. But this would make small difference to me if I can only return to my children in the spring. It is only six weeks now since we left home! I can hardly believe it is not as many months! And they say it may be forty days yet ere we

reach our port. I can never be sufficiently thankful that Mary Gibbs came with me, for it seems to me I could hardly have kept my senses if I had been alone. My dear baby boy would have been a great comfort, but perhaps he could not have lived through the first terrible month of our voyage. . . . If I should never return, — and often I feel as if I never should, — tell William that I give my son to him. He must bring him up as his own, and make him as much like himself as possible. My little girls cannot be better off than they are with the Searles. They would bring them up soberly and religiously, and that is all I should desire.”

“The perfect quiet and tranquillity I have been in since my husband’s departure have been very favorable for me. I have brought my mind into a state of greater resignation in two months than I could have done in twelve at home. Having nothing to disturb my reflections, and having always before me the most sublime spectacles of nature, it would have been strange if I had not become resigned, from the constant view of the power and goodness of the Almighty. Most of the books we have with us are of the religious kind; that has been very happy for me. In all cases may I be able to act up to my duty, however I am situated, and then I cannot be very wretched.”

“After a passage of eighty days, we yesterday morning came to anchor before the town of St. Sebastian, exactly two months from the day when my husband died. With what different feelings should I have entered this beautiful harbor if he had been with me! But such reflections were equally vain and improper. I am sure that all is for the best, and I endeavor to prepare my mind for all that yet may be before me. This is my time of trial, and I will not shrink under it! But if you could see me, you would think it required great fortitude to keep up my spirits. For Mary Gibbs is so very ill that sometimes I think it impossible that she should ever be able to get home. And if she should die, and leave me alone, what shall I do? There

is a vessel to sail for Philadelphia, which I should certainly go home by, if she were only tolerably well. But that is now out of the question. I am almost certain that she could not live to arrive. She attributes her illness to the repeated colds taken during the first dreadful month of our passage. And she had so lost her strength that the labor of getting up our little ladder to the deck took away her breath for a quarter of an hour, and she looked pale, as if dead. . . . It will be natural for you to think that all the circumstances attending my husband's death must have rendered it much harder to be borne. But I view the event quite differently. Sometimes, indeed, it has been terrible to dwell on the idea that he had no comfort around him, and no friend with him but myself. But he was happy in view of another world, and all the time I thought of nothing else. . . . I have wished a thousand times that I had brought my poor baby with me. He would be such an amusement, and of late I could have taken care of him without trouble. But I do not regret leaving him behind, for his father was very averse to my bringing him, and therefore it would have been wrong to do so."

"*Jany.* 11. Rio Janeiro. Never have I felt so depressed as since arriving here; everything is so very beautiful, — the climate so soft and delightful. As soon as I was on the piazza of this house, it was impossible not to feel how much I should have enjoyed it if my husband had only been here with me; and if he had but sailed, as we ought to have done, last August, he might now have been well! There is a young physician now at Col. Sumpter's, from New York, who was very ill with lung complaint when he first arrived. But he has quite recovered. Never again, where I had any influence, would I delay a voyage a month. I am convinced that such a step, if taken in season, would be almost always successful. But these are vain regrets, and I try to be thankful for the blessings which I still have left."

She then gives descriptions of the kind host and hostess who had welcomed them to their charming and comfortable home as if they had been sisters, and sketches the exquisite scenery and the wondrous flowers and fruits, all so new to her, and then continues : —

You will be surprised, perhaps, that I can be so disengaged from my sorrow as thus to describe these scenes. Indeed, I often wonder at it myself. But though some parts of the day I feel very wretched, there are other hours when I am perfectly tranquil, and think I can be contented in any situation, and even happy, in trying to do my duty, whatever it may be. I can think of my husband's death always with composure. During one short struggle with myself before it took place, it appeared to me that I could never live through it. But, after a little time, I determined, though every circumstance of my situation was so dreadful, that I could and would bear anything ! The constant remembrance which I have kept up, that all the suffering in this world is just nothing compared to eternal happiness, and that it is a means of promoting that, if properly used, has enabled me for the most part to support myself, and to forget myself so far as to do my duty to others. It would have been a great consolation to me if my husband had been strong enough to talk to me about his dying, and to give some advice. I know perfectly well all he would have said, and shall endeavor to act up to it. But it would be delightful to remember the words he made use of. . . .

I almost dread to hear from home lest all should not be well. But I trust I shall be enabled to bear all, like a Christian, even should they all be taken from me, and still find something to make life desirable, by trying to do good to others. Do not feel in the least anxious for anything that can befall me in this country ; for, depend upon it, I shall be able to endure whatever may come here. If

Mary should get better I know of nothing very bad that can occur ; and if she should die I shall feel much more for her family than for myself, though I am much attached to her, and my situation alone would be deplorable. But I have no fears, happily, either at sea or on shore, except for the health of my friends. And even if I were obliged to go home in a ship alone, I should not mind it very much, if I was with clever people. I do believe, however, that Mary will be recruited in a few weeks. It appears to me sometimes as if I could not stay any longer ; and I am obliged to think how miserable I should be to occasion her death by my rashness, to enable me to behave as I ought to do. For myself, I should not care at all for all I would suffer from weather. It could not well be worse than we endured for the first month of our passage. How trifling such suffering seems in contrast with what I have felt since ! . . . It is impossible to know the desolation of a widow's heart, except by experiencing it. My sorrow has never been very violent, but it must be lasting. I was so glad that my husband was released from suffering, and gone to happiness, that I hardly thought of myself at first. It seemed to me that I could be contented in trying to bring up my children to be worthy of their father, and in doing all that he would have wished me to do. I even rejoiced that he had been taken first. For I am sure that he loved me so well that he would have mourned my loss as I do his. It is not till lately that I have fully realized what my feelings must be when I return home. I cannot go to housekeeping again. It would be impossible for me to be as cheerful as a Christian should be in such a situation. I could not see from my window my brother George and Mr. Perkins going home, and feel that my husband will never return again!!! It has always been my opinion that to be happy as well as resigned is one of the Christian duties. And how can I ever be tolerably happy, when living alone ? It is impossible, and I will not put myself in such a situa-

tion. I must live with somebody, until my children are old enough to be my companions. If I can persuade Mrs. Searle to take me to board, with my children, then in the care of them and in the cultivation of my own mind to fit me better for educating them, and with sober, rational conversation, my time might pass tranquilly, and I might find the only kind of enjoyment I can now hope for.

She then describes the houses, piazza, etc., and continues : —

At the end of the piazza is a small apartment fitted up as a chapel. Such a place of prayer is to be found, they tell me, in every country-house belonging to the Portuguese. It is very highly decorated, the surroundings gilt and painted with flowers, and over the altar is an image of the Virgin dressed in white satin with silver trimming. All this appears to some people very ridiculous. But for my part I cannot see any place consecrated to the worship of the Most High without some degree of veneration. From this little altar have no doubt ascended acceptable prayers to Heaven. The Sabbath days in this country are spent in a way that must give great pain to an American.

Then describing the mode of spending Sunday, after early service, in the open bull-fights, parades of soldiers, etc., she adds : —

But it is now fourteen weeks since I have been present at any public worship, and I have determined to go to some church to-morrow. The music at least will give me pleasure.

She then passes to a description of the service she had attended in the Prince's Chapel, sketching in vivid colors the exquisitely rich and varied flowers by the roadsides as they drove along : —

We could not ride two yards without exclaiming, How

delightful! I feel it would be criminal not to be pleased with all the profusion of beauty. Surely it must have been the intention of the Deity that our senses should be charmed, and I should think myself unworthy of the blessings of sight and hearing if I did not enjoy my rides and the music which I heard. I can attempt no description, and can only tell you that I stood in one position three hours, insensible to fatigue or heat, and that in viewing the paintings and listening to the sweet sounds for a short time I forgot who and what I was. The music was incomparably finer than any I have ever before heard. There were instruments of every kind, and a number of singers, chiefly Italian. I was delighted extremely, and willingly would have stayed much longer.

A whole long month and more yet passed away, while she waited for her friend's recovery.

In three weeks from this time, February fourth, we hope and trust to set sail with Captain Pilsbury, our faithful friend, for home. It will be a day of thanksgiving for me, as I am so homesick that sometimes I find it difficult to behave decently, . . . and we have no one here to help us to fly from ourselves, which I often find it necessary to do. Erelong, I hope and trust to see you, my dear children, and all friends.

Again : —

I am heartsick of delay! There is a possibility that we may be yet longer delayed, though now it is the 8th of March. If so, I fear I shall be ill in body, as well as mind, for anything I can bear better than suspense. But it is idle to complain. I trust in God that I shall be returned home, some time.

BRIG LIBERTY, RIO JANEIRO, *March 9.*

DEAR LOUISA, — I write you a few lines just to let you know that we sail to-morrow, the 10th of March, for Phila-

delphia, as our captain has taken freight for that port; and also that my brother John has just bid me adieu, as we leave him here, to embark in a few days for the Cape of Good Hope.

Finally comes this last letter: —

PHILADELPHIA, *May 13, 1811.*

We arrived here, and came immediately to Sarah Gibbs. It rains very hard. But to-morrow I shall go, at any rate. It would be impossible to stay any longer. Mary G. is much better, but not well enough to accompany me. Will you tell my mother Channing that I shall be with them on Saturday at the furthest?

On her return from Rio, about the middle of May, 1811, the widowed mother went immediately to Mrs. Channing's, in Berry Street, near the Federal Street Church, where her husband's brother William was preaching. Then we hear of her at Cohasset, Newburyport, Brookline, Lancaster, Boston. In the autumn of 1812, she went to live at her father's house, in what is now Mount Vernon Street. Her husband died intestate, leaving \$4,273.24. The widow received one third, or \$1,424.41, and each of the three children, Susan C., Lucy E., William H., \$949.60. William E. Channing was a constant, affectionate, wise friend, always ready with his sympathy, always prudent in his counsel, always generous with his purse. He was a devoted brother, heartily interested in all that concerned her and her children, especially solicitous about William, who looked up to his uncle with fond reverence as his spiritual father. A few extracts from Dr. Channing's letters will show how the nephew was regarded: —

July 31, 1811.

. . . You must not suffer any views of your duty as a parent, whether suggested by your own mind or by others, to produce a feeling of anxiety, timidity, and distrust, which may palsy your efforts, and even render your children sources of misery to you. Nothing is required of you beyond the ability which God has given. Do your duty with a humble reliance on Him, and you may be assured that He who is the widow's God, Father of the fatherless, will protect and bless you and yours. In writing you, I have a strong desire to express feelings which, my better judgment and my self-distrust admonish me, ought not to be expressed. The recollection of my brother and of what I owe to him and his family almost impels me to offer you services which perhaps I shall never render. A consciousness of the many imperfections of my character and a sense of the uncertainties of futurity make me fearful of exciting in you any great expectations from my friendship and aid. I fear sometimes lest your partiality has led you to expect too much already. My fear, however, ought not to prevent my saying that I tenderly love you and yours, and that I shall be grateful to Heaven if I can in any way serve you, especially in that work which lies nearest your heart, and which, we may believe, interests the heart of our departed friend, the training of your children for usefulness and immortality. . . .

Your very affectionate brother, W. E. C.

August 24, 1812.

. . . You thought little Will did not behave as well as usual, but his uncle saw nothing very culpable, — or at least the general impression which I brought away was such as his mother would not wish to improve. . . .

It seems to me that you have as fine materials to work upon, as lovely children to train, as any I meet. I do not mean that they are "already perfect;" I see only a good

soil. It depends on you and on themselves what shall be the growth. I have fears, — for to how many influences will their minds be exposed! — but I have still stronger hopes. . . . Kiss the children for me. W. E. C.

October 12, 1818.

. . . I inclose a bill for William's education. You will give him every advantage. . . .

June 10, 1819.

. . . I inclose to you \$100, half of which I wish you to appropriate to William's instruction. . . .

November 24, 1819.

. . . Miss Searle read to me, before my journey, an extract from one of William's compositions, which pleased me a good deal. I sent you in the spring, I think, \$50 for William, which I hope you received, and now inclose \$50, which I wish you to expend on whatever will do him good in mind or body. . . .

August 4, 1820.

. . . I suppose that you have made up your mind as to William's continuing at Lancaster. I hope he will be under the care of some one who will inform you very freely, if your absence should operate upon him unfavorably. I wish to bear the expense of his education, and inclose now \$100. . . .

May 27, 1822.

MY DEAR SUSAN, — I inclose to you \$150, to be used for your children, and I cannot part with you without expressing my tender interest in you and them. . . . Give my love to your children, and teach them to look upon me as a friend solicitous for their improvement and welfare. . . . Farewell. Your affectionate brother,

W. E. C.

Thus was William Henry Channing the child of an extraordinary lineage and an unusual care. He

knew and felt it all his life. A sketch of himself, begun in his later years, opens with this sentence : —

Life has been for me so full to overflow with inward blessedness and outward musing ; such companies of benign and saintly, loving and lovely, friends have encompassed me from infancy ; Providence has cast my destiny amidst such majestic events and social movements, and summoned me to come and go amid a company of such heroic hosts ; the circles of culture opening around and above have been so ample and exalting, through ever-expanding spheres of experience ; the spiritual discipline of training schools and apprenticeship has been so searching through alternate trial and triumph ; and finally the convictions and assurances, the hopes and aspirations, of a prolonged career have led me toward sunset up to so lofty a peak of vision, whence is beheld so wide a panorama, bathed in the glorious promises of a bright to-morrow, that my spirit in gratitude to the Father of mercies, and in loyalty to his vast family on earth and in heaven, must pour out one word, at least, of good cheer, one pæan of praise, ere passing into the Silent World.

He was a singularly beautiful boy, with dark eyes, complexion, and hair ; light, graceful, elegant ; expressive in countenance and manner ; sensitive, mobile, responsive ; delicate, high-strung, imaginative. He describes a dream that he had as a child. One night he had fallen asleep after the short prayer which his mother never omitted as he lay in his crib by her bedside. Suddenly some noise startled him, and broad awake in the dark he saw through the window, shining, as it seemed, directly upon him, an intensely brilliant star, flashing with changing colors. To use his own words : —

It fascinated my gaze till it became like an angel's

eye. It seemed to burn in and penetrate to my inmost being. My little heart beat fast and faster, till I could bear the intolerable blaze no more. And hearing the steps of some servant in the passage, I sprang from my crib, ran swiftly to the door, and, in my long night-gown, with bare, noiseless feet, followed down the stairway to the lower hall. All looked brilliant, and I heard the hum of many voices. Evidently there was a large party gathered, but I fearlessly pressed on. Anything seemed better than the glowing eyes of my star above. The footman flung open the drawing-room door, and a flood of light with a peal of laughter burst forth, and in the midst some voice cried out, "What is that in white behind you?" The servant had, affrighted, turned and drawn aside. Instantly from the brilliant circle stepped forth my mother, and, folding me in her bosom, said soothingly, "What troubles my boy?" All I could do was to fling my arms about her neck and whisper, "Oh, mamma! The star! the star! I could not bear the star!" How often, through a long life, has that infantile experience, with its symbolic meaning, shone ever more brilliantly upon me!

An intimate friend of his mother recalls another incident that illustrates the sensibility of the child. He was playing on the floor. Some one came and told a pitiful story. The mother's eyes filled with tears. The child looked up, and seeing her, as he thought, weeping, ran to her, threw his arms round her neck, and broke into a violent fit of sobbing. It was some minutes before he could be quieted. This "excessive idealism," as he himself called it in a letter to William Elder, of Philadelphia, went with him to the end. He was forever beholding a star. His great word was "love." His temperament, always glowing, his organization rendered tremulous and excitable by the

mother's anxiety on account of his father's health, his early familiarity with poetic literature, his intimacy from infancy with spiritual ideas and intellectual people, predisposed him to a celestial kind of sentimentalism, which was in a terrestrial sense the weakness, in a heavenly sense the strength, of his nature. Never was there a case where the child was more absolutely father to the man. The star but passed through a temporary eclipse; it emerged soon, and cleared itself as it ascended.

II.

THE IDYL OF BOYHOOD.

EDUCATION began early ; indeed, it was always in process. It was woven into the very texture of his being. It was part of his existence. There was never a time, apparently, when the exercise of his intellectual powers was other than a delight, for they opened naturally in an atmosphere of thought ; knowledge and love from the beginning went hand in hand. His mother's notions of education were expressed in a letter written from Newburyport in October, 1812.

This is a good place for a child to pass its youth in ; but no eye can be like a mother's, and I should never give up the care of my child except in stern necessity.

I agree with you entirely about schools, but their bad effects are not permanent when they are counteracted by firm and good discipline at home. Boys have better opportunities for growing up in virtue under their mother's care as much as possible during all their early years, and probably my son will never leave me until he must learn Latin and Greek. Would that I were qualified to fit him myself for college ! . . . However, I never trouble myself much by anticipating evils of any kind, and in regard to my children I never permit myself to fear that they can do otherwise than grow up virtuous and good so long as I steadily endeavor to inculcate lofty, pure, and elevating feelings and ennobling principles.

The first important school was at Lancaster, Mass., when the boy was about seven years old ; for Mr. Gree-

ley's school at Brookline, where the boy took his first lessons in Latin, was of less account. The lad was a child at that time, fond of childish sports and frolic. Even then, however, the groundwork was mainly intellectual. He acted out Napoleon's battles, followed Gulliver in his travels, lived on an island with Robinson Crusoe, enacted the part of Christian in "Pilgrim's Progress," wandered with Telemachus, told over the stories in "Arabian Nights," built castles in the air upon foundations laid by Berquin and Miss Edgeworth. Mrs. Channing went to the beautiful town of Lancaster probably on account of its neighborhood to Boston, where her brother Stephen lived in rural comfort and affluence. Besides, its advantages as a place of tuition were unusually great. At Lancaster there was an admirable private school, to which William was sent, and where he obtained the common rudiments that belong to a seminary, together with a refinement of taste, a personal care, a seclusion from all corrupting influences, which are unattainable in a large public establishment. Mr. Solomon P. Miles, the son of a clergyman in New Hampshire, but afterwards himself a Unitarian, already distinguished as a student of natural science, and warmly befriended if not actually started by Stephen Higginson and his sister, was established there. He was later principal of the English High School in Boston, a circumstance which inclined Mrs. Channing to send her son to it; but, her son being destined for Harvard, the Latin School had the prior claim. It is possible that the lad frequently visited the High School, either to see his former teacher, of whom he was very fond, or to gain instruction in writing, a branch indifferently taught at the other. This played

very well into the domestic plans, for he could live at home, and be, morning and evening, under the maternal direction, which was incessant and scrupulous. A vast deal of reading was done, of the best kind and of the greatest variety, so that there was not a chance for the customary depression or aversion incident to monotony. Every kind of cultivation went on simultaneously and was associated with a certain amount of exciting mental entertainment. The hours spent at school were neither tedious nor seemingly useless, as time taken from active life is apt to be. His cousins too walked daily from Bolton over the hills, thus keeping him in close relations with the family.

At an early age he went to the Latin School in Boston, then under the charge of Benjamin Gould, the accomplished father of the astronomer. Here he learned by heart the Odes of Horace, of which he was very fond, studied Homer's Iliad, reading the earlier books over and over, mastered Virgil, Cicero, Cæsar, Sallust, Tacitus, and imbibed intellectual tastes of a high order by perusing the classic dramatists.

He does not seem to have been in the least a book-worm or a "dig." At Brookline, where he passed his summers as a child, he engaged in sports, took long walks in the country, gathered nuts and berries, played at farming. He learned how to swim, helped tread the hay, watched the swallows, joined in husking - bees, roasted corn, picked apples. He mentions the War of 1812, the childish uniform, the martial games, the battle songs of his uncles. He saw the fight of the Chesapeake and Shannon through a telescope from the top of a hill near Brookline, was interested in the death of Lawrence, greeted with joy the return of peace, gloried in the illuminations. At

the Latin School he was member of a debating club, took part in the processions and parades that welcomed Lafayette in 1824, and frequently saw the general on horseback. There were badges and medals in those times, he takes pains to inform us, as if he were amused by such things. He read novels, too: "Belinda," "Helen," "The Absentee," "Robinson Crusoe," "Miscellaneous Tales," the "Arabian Nights," Miss Opie's stories, "The Exiles of Siberia," Walter Scott's "Tales of a Grandfather," "Scottish Chiefs," Cooper's novels, "The Lady of the Lake," "Marmion." His childish favorites were William Wallace, Kosciusko, Tell. He delighted in "Thaddeus of Warsaw" and records of Polish valor. Miss Edgeworth's "Frank" and the "Sequel" were prime favorites in boyhood. Later, came the Waverley Novels, Burns, Campbell, Crabbe, Southey, Akenside; later still, Ariosto, Tasso, Petrarch, the "Spectator," Burke, Boswell, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Marcus Aurelius, "Rasselas," Byron, Hemans, Barry Cornwall, all the higher works of literature, which he reveled in as a pleasure.

The education of his spiritual nature was begun in his infancy, and voluntarily continued, not in the way of duty, but in the way of privilege. He was familiar with Jeremy Taylor, Herbert, William Law, Hervey's "Meditations;" he actually read sermons, and remembered ministers pleasantly. His childish awe was awakened by a microscope that showed him the wonders of flowers and insects. This feeling did not pass away, but deepened into reverence and intelligent admiration. The telescope disclosed the mysteries of sun and moon. He tells us that he had a real love for astronomy and a passion for mathemat-

ics, which last, however, he did not pursue far, by reason of "great disappointments," though the effect of the study in enlarging his views of the universe was permanent. The daily inculcation of religious ideas at home kept the feeling of veneration alive.

Of his course at the Latin School there are slight traces, but they show a singularly mature and thoughtful mind. There is extant a boyish essay, written probably in 1823-4, and read before a literary society, on "Trial by Jury," which concludes thus: "The chief value of the jury is as a defense against oppression, as a defense of the people against the government, as a check upon the judges, as securing the press in libel suits. Bentham says it is an admirable institution for barbarous ages, but not fit for enlightened times." The essay, which covers but four pages of note-paper, indicates reading and independent consideration of the subject.

A theme on "Reason and Instinct," prepared at the same time, contained the passage: "Instinct may be the same in animals that reason is in man; but if so, reason is instinct carried to the highest degree of perfection." The master, Mr. Gould, was struck by this remark, and asked young Channing where it came from. The lad answered in all simplicity: "From my own mind, sir."

The following incident belongs probably to this period. The master, having occasion to leave the room, gave the boys to the charge of young W. T——, a lad of Channing's age, and his intimate friend. T—— was told to keep order and report any cases of unruly behavior. This he did, thereby insuring the enmity of those who were named as well as of all that sympathized with them. It was determined to make

T—— suffer. His schoolmates formed two lines outside the door, determined to force him to “run the gauntlet.” Channing saw what was going on, and said to his friend, “Take my arm.” Together they walked down the avenue of menacing youths, Channing looking them firmly in the eye, as knowing their plan and proud to defeat it. He was always quick to resent an injustice, never counting the cost of his championship.

This knightly heroism, which was a distinguishing trait of his manhood, was characteristic of even earlier years. It happened once in his first school-days that the teacher was called out for a few minutes. The boys, of course, many of them, misbehaved. The master, returning, called on the leaders to come forward. Nobody moved. Presently, Channing and his dear cousin, James Perkins, rose, came up to the desk, and stood there as self-accused culprits. The teacher, much moved, perceived the truth at once, and sharply reprimanded the older boys who had meanly allowed those little innocents to plead guilty to a disobedience they never committed.

On another occasion a schoolmate told him of his intention to run away. He did so. Search was made; and through Channing's information the hiding-place of the runaway was found. The boy was very angry with his betrayer, as he esteemed him, and passionately accused him of treachery. Channing said to him frankly: “I think I did right, but if you think I did wrong, *strike here*,” at the same time throwing open his jacket and baring his breast. This looks dramatic, even stagey; and so it might be considered did we not know that the act sprang from real conviction, from deep feeling on his part.

He went to college when scarcely more than a boy, having been graduated in the somewhat famous class of 1829, along with Oliver Wendell Holmes and James Freeman Clarke, his intimate friend. President Kirkland was at the head of the institution; Dr. Popkin taught Greek; Professor Farrar taught mathematics; Charles Follen was instructor in German; Francis Sales was tutor in Spanish. Other professors were Fessenden, Noyes, Warren, Webster, Nuttall. Channing lived with the Danas, and was in familiar intercourse with Washington Allston, naturally mingling less than others with his mates, who had not the same social privileges. He attended recitations regularly, but was not a brilliant or ambitious scholar, being more interested in general literature. He was a thoughtful, meditative, conscientious, high-toned youth; rather elevated, as it seemed to some, in his self-consciousness, but always courteous and friendly. A classmate remembers one occasion when the professor failed to appear, and there was what the students called a "miss." The class, after waiting a few minutes, went away. He himself stayed a little longer. Channing turned and urged him to go, which surprised him, for he had always regarded Channing as being a trifle superfine in the matter of duty. The boy clearly had a streak of nature in his composition; he liked some things better than recitations. He came to college with a reputation as a declaimer, but was not distinguished for rhetorical excellence while at Harvard. He took no prizes, received no honors, as his father did, was in nowise especially conspicuous. He was a member of the Porcellian Club, more literary then than it was later, and speaks of a Dinner Club which evidently was enjoyed, perhaps because it

gave opportunity for the indulgence of his conversational powers. He liked a game of football, but did not approve of the custom of kicking shins with hard boots, and refrained. He was excitable in temper, but the feeling of kindness was uppermost, and he would do nothing that had a savor of cruelty in it. His passions were always dreaded by him as the foes of peace.

In his junior year he was attacked by a severe illness, and forced to make a journey. There are letters to his mother and sisters from Connecticut, New York, Richmond, the White Mountains, full of buoyancy, pleasantry, laughter, delicate appreciation of scenery, hearty enjoyment of his companions, a disposition to look on the bright side of everything, to make light of inconveniences, and to catch the droll aspect of events. Here is an extract from one dated May 6th, at Goochland, a village about half-way between Charlottesville and Richmond : —

The ride from Fredericksburg to Richmond is through the most uncultivated and barren parts of the State, and was, it must be confessed, desolate in the extreme ; but to-day we have journeyed along the north bank of James River, through a land flowing with milk and honey, wide-extending fields of tall, rich grain, waving gently in the breeze, stretching on every side around, our horizon bounded by beautifully wooded hills, covered with as variegated a garment as in autumn, so great is the contrast between the whitish velvet foliage of the sycamore, the polished yellow-green of the oak, and the dark, solemn hue of the pine and cedar ; and now and then we caught a glimpse of the river as it meandered on its way through the deep valley and the fertile meadows.

He visited the Natural Bridge in Virginia, moral-

ized in awestruck mood over the cathedral in Baltimore, saw Washington from the dome of the Capitol, went to Mount Vernon over a terribly muddy road, looked at John Randolph in his seat, stood an hour before West's picture of the Christ, at Philadelphia, admired the system at the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, talked with Miss Dix ; in fact, went everywhere. He enjoyed vastly the society of his aunts and cousins in Richmond (he seems to have had some in every city, and of all creeds), went to the theatre in New York, called on pretty girls (cousins), and walked up and down Broadway, not ashamed of his college uniform, but lost in contemplation of the beaux and belles who showed off their millinery and tailoring on that fashionable promenade.

He returned full of health and spirits to rejoin his class in the autumn of 1828, and was duly graduated, not among the very first, but near enough to the head to be elected into the Phi Beta Kappa Society. His college recollections were always dear to him ; he had a great deal of class feeling, and looked back on his life at Harvard with genuine pleasure. The days at Lancaster were his halcyon days ; Boston continued the delight ; and Cambridge completed the enchantment. Henceforth the seriousness deepens, the outlook widens, and the gladness takes on another higher tone. In a little account-book marked "School-Days," amid a record of expenses, — one oil-feeder, one wick-yarn, one bottle of blacking, one water-pail, one bottle of ink, one quire of foolscap paper, — I find the following sentences, along with many others less striking. They are in the handwriting of the early years, and, moreover, have been marked at a later period by himself.

I draw a proof of the natural predisposition to good in man from the fact that a single bad act does much more to injure us materially than a single good one does to improve us. One is merely holding on in the path on which we began our journey of life ; the other is a deviation, however little, still leading us from the way. Repentance is merely bringing us back to the right road. Man is naturally pure and good, endowed with strong passions, which, uncurbed, make him a child of hell, but which, properly repressed, give activity, warmth, beauty, and energy to his whole character. Men, in attempting to quench entirely, even to the last glimmering spark, the passions, make a great mistake. Nothing was given to man but may be made use of. Anger, softened and controlled, changes to indignation and fortitude, which make the cheek blush at the sight of vice, and uphold the martyr in the horror and agony of death.

Every one of common observation must know that his noblest thoughts seem always to come as if by inspiration, rise spontaneously and without effort, frequently flash in upon him suddenly, and when he begins to reason upon them to make them his own, a part of his own mind, they seem quite a different thing.

The true Christian, though always cheerful, never is run away with by buoyancy and hilarity. His temper is always equable, never ardent and unrestrained, never cold, close, or narrow ; he does not yield to the intoxicating excitements of vanity or the stultifying chill of depression.

The same book contains long extracts from Wordsworth's "Despondency Corrected" and other parts of the "Excursion."

Another small book, marked "College-Days," has quotations from the sermons of Channing, Gannett, Follen, Sargent, Stearns. There are fore-gleams of his future career, indications of that inclination to abstract speculation on moral and religious subjects

which was characteristic of his manhood, and strengthened with age.

Several of his college "themes" are before me. The subjects were, no doubt, assigned, but they contain remarkable passages, as for example : —

There is pleasure in the exercise of all those qualities whose direct tendency is to remove evil and improve the character. Cheerfulness is ever near to sweeten the toils of active industry, and hope goes hand in hand with fortitude and patience. . . . We rejoice to think that virtue is thus its own reward and vice its own punishment, and that thus this world seems the imperfect model of a future, where the tendencies of good and evil shall be fully followed out.

Truth does not sit upon our roof-tree and amidst our own familiar groves, warbling her sweet song alike to every ear. She is the far-famed bird of a thousand ages, that makes her perch on rocks of adamant, among icy mountains and snow-clad deserts ; and he who would listen to her prophetic voice must toil steadily on through the frozen regions of error and doubt, with benevolence for his staff and conscience for his polar star, and speak the powerful spell to which she answers.

It appears to me pitiful to see any one admire an author's genius so much as to be perfectly blind to his defects, and calmly give up the right of forming an unbiased judgment.

It will be immediately seen that the continuance of this universal language would have damped the ardor of enterprise, and fastened shackles on the free spirit of colonization.

He only can rise to the eminence he is capable of attaining who acts from a pure, uncontaminated love for the pursuit in which he is employed. . . . He only is truly virtuous who acts from a real, unmixed love of goodness, who listens to the voice of conscience, which murmurs low

from the deep recesses of his own heart, as to prophetic whispers, and will adhere to his ideas of right and honor without thinking whether those who come after him shall praise or censure.

There is no one whom we shall probably meet in decent society from whom we cannot derive some information which we probably should not have drawn from any other source, or who is not in some respects our superior. . . . This [the enforced separation from old connections] discloses the true state of our own affections, enabling us to determine whether our hearts are bright with the true fire of love burning within, or are mostly shining with beams reflected from others.

In a draft of a letter to a young collegian, written when he was eighteen years old, besides much good advice respecting reading and study, he says : —

Every literary man, everybody of refinement and cultivation, is expected to read Newton, and this he can never do without understanding geometry. . . . Mathematics [which he disliked, and did not willingly study] are a greater discipline to the mind than almost any other, inasmuch as they make it necessary for a person to fix his attention deeply and exclusively upon what is before him, and cultivate that class of faculties which is the noblest in man. I mean the reasoning powers.

In college he prepared the sketch of a sermon on the Omnipresence of God, which contains this pregnant sentence : “The mental eye beholds a spirit pervading this building, and breathing everywhere : that spirit is God.”

He was equal to any effort of self-denial. Belonging to a club the members of which were smokers, and coming out one evening into the pure air of a starry night, the contrast of the smoky room with the fresh

atmosphere made such an impression upon him that he threw his cigar away, and resolved never to touch tobacco again, and he kept his vow.

He was once the proud possessor of a sword-cane. Running across a bridge in pursuit of an adversary who had roused his fiery temper by an insult, the sword jumped out of its sheath, fell into the water, and was lost. He was glad of it, and for the time renounced his faith in the methods of violence. Providence had removed his weapon of offense.

III.

PREPARATION FOR THE MINISTRY.

BY cast of mind, early education, unremitted domestic and social influence, the insensible push of events, the youth was predestined to the ministry. The choice of a profession was agitated while he was yet in college, with something more than the usual formality; for his dearly remembered father had been a lawyer, one of his uncles was an eminent physician, and one was fast raising literature to the rank of a calling. But if there was any wavering, it was slight and temporary; the bent was spiritual. I say *spiritual* rather than *clerical*, for he never took a literal view of his profession. His mother's wish was in that direction, as she had perpetually before her eyes the example of her husband's brother William, her standard of all excellence now that her beloved companion was gone. The great man, who loved his nephew well and was deeply concerned in his welfare, was guarded in his expressions:—

Few things would rejoice me more than to see William what I think he may be and would be in the ministry. He has the elements of which I wrote you, if I may trust those who know him better than I do. Of his moral and religious sensibilities I have no doubt, and I remember you told me some time ago that he had a firmness of moral purpose for which I had not given him credit. On the great point of a course of life, perhaps I am too fearful of influencing others.

I have no hesitation, however, after what you tell me of William's feelings, of recommending to him the profession to which he inclines.

And again, on August 28th : —

William is now approaching the time when he must take the great step of choosing a profession. On this point I think you have expressed a wish that he might choose mine. I should truly rejoice in this, if his own heart led him to it with sufficient strength to insure a growing interest in it. I consider my profession as almost infinitely sacred above all others, when its true nature is understood and its true spirit imbibed. But as it is too often viewed and followed, it seems to me of little worth to him who exercises it, or to those on whom it ought to act. It requires moral elevation of sentiment that the purposes of Christianity may be understood ; moral energy, a spirit of self-sacrifice, that these purposes may be pursued with resolution and power. I do not mean that a young man is to possess these requisites in a great degree at first, but he must have the seeds, and give some promise of them ; and if so, I consider my calling as leaving all others very, very far behind. But when taken up for its respectability, for reputation, for support, and followed mechanically, regularly, with little or no heartiness and devotion, or when seized upon fanatically and with a blind and bigoted zeal, I think as poorly of it as men of the world do, who, I grieve to say, have had too much reason for setting us down among the drones of the hive of society.

A year or more was to pass after his graduation before he entered on the study of divinity, which was agreed on. The following extract from a letter of his uncle to his mother, written in 1830, fills up the gap in our history : —

1830.

As to William, it seems to me that the first thing to be attended to in the coming year is his health. Whatever he may think of himself, he wants more robustness to meet the demands of his profession. I think a school is not the place to get strength. If, indeed, he will give up all intellectual exertion, and will spend all his hours out of school in exercise and amusement, he may lose nothing, but that is the utmost to be hoped. I kept school a year and a half, and persisted in joining study with my daily work, and I have not regained to this day what I lost. Now a year given up to an occupation which will add no vigor to the body and will do very little for the mind seems to me a great sacrifice ; not too great, if duty calls him to it, but does the call exist ? As to his expenses, I shall be glad to take any part which may be needed. In doing this, I trust I shall lay on him no painful feeling of obligation. If I should, it would be better for him to labor for himself. I wish him, however, to feel that in the little I have done for him I have considered myself as the privileged person. To aid a young man of William's character, even if a stranger, in fitting himself for a useful and honorable course, would be to me a great gratification. In his case, I have had the additional happiness of affection, and will add, too, that I am not altogether disinterested in wishing him to get strength and to avail himself of every opportunity of improvement. I live in the expectation of not living long. Should I be taken, there are services which William can then render me more effectually, perhaps, than any one else. I should esteem his friendship for my son a great blessing.

There is no record of school-keeping, but some intimation that the youth journeyed for health. Philadelphia is spoken of in connection with him. He was more or less delicate in constitution all his life. It is

astonishing that he was able to do so much, with his physical disabilities. It shows what power mind has over body. His uncle writes to him in Philadelphia, praising his gift of adaptation to different states of society, and continues thus, in a letter dated January 15, 1831: —

I have no desire to bind you down exclusively to theology; but I hope no day will pass without the devotion of part of it to some branch of professional study. Do not forget what I said to you about the philology of the Scriptures. Your danger is from loving too much the easier paths of knowledge. You must work your way through the rougher. I wish you to gain the power of patient, continued, laborious thought. Truth, truth, is of infinite price, and as yet we all hold it mixed up with deplorable error; and although a moral preparation for it is of primary importance, yet I expect little from this unless joined with force and concentration of thought.

And again, touching on another point which was afterwards destined to be vital in his nephew's ministry, he says, in a letter to him from St. Croix, dated March 13, 1831: —

I was a little disappointed at finding you set down the idolatry of wealth as the besetting sin of Philadelphia. I thought there was more of the old-fashioned aristocracy in that city, that birth weighed more than money. I am glad that you feel so distinctly and strongly the degraded condition of what are called the highest classes. Amidst some refinements of manners they are so wanting in refinement and elevation of sentiment, in perception of spiritual excellence, and in the consciousness of their solemn obligations to the less favored classes of society, that it is time for the friends and ministers of enlightened religion, laying aside equally all flattery and all bitterness, to seek their reformation by every instrument of persuasion, reasoning, and

heart-searching reproof. I hope you will make no compromise with wickedness in high places. There it is entrenched, and thence a pestilential influence spreads through the whole mass. I write too fast to weigh my words, but I am not in a cynical fit. I give you my deliberate convictions.

It is significant that this passage was among those marked for quotation in the memoir of Dr. Channing, published in 1848, the period of the nephew's early socialistic fervor. For the rest, he seems to have enjoyed Philadelphia. He writes to his mother, among other things : —

You say I never mention Mr. Furness. I am surprised I have not. Every Sunday, almost, I go out intending to hear some new preacher ; but usually I find myself entering the iron gate before the little marble church in Locust Street. I have heard Mr. Skinner and several others, but prefer him to them all. He is very much admired here, and justly.

In the year 1830 he must have begun the study of divinity in serious earnest. With him it was serious earnest indeed. There were few hours wasted in idleness or gossip. His industry was incessant, if we may judge from the results that we are permitted to see. Mr. Andrews Norton expounded the New Testament ; Dr. Palfrey taught Hebrew and the criticism of the Old Testament ; Charles Follen had charge of the department of Ethics and Philosophy ; Henry Ware, Jr., lectured on Pastoral Theology, and the whole range of the minister's work. Among his classmates and friends were James Freeman Clarke, Samuel May, Chandler Robbins, William Eliot, Nathaniel Hall, and Oliver W. Holmes. He made himself acquainted with the English deists, the

French encyclopædists, the German rationalists. He taught Sunday-school at Federal Street Church, and had a class in the Charlestown Penitentiary. The new problems came before him, — colonization, abolition, the rights of woman. The evidences of Christianity, the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels, were exhaustively considered, according to the light of those days. Fundamental questions in ethics and religion were raised and answered. There are long treatises on Evil, on Immortality, on Christianity. There are many pages of biblical criticism proving his acquaintance with texts and comment. There is a dialogue of fifty-two pages between a Christian and a skeptic, in which, of course, the Christian has the last word; but so free in tone is it as almost to anticipate Renan, and in temper it is calm, sweet, fair, and a good deal more than tolerant; while all the time devotional exercises were kept up, prayers were written, sermons were read, contemplations were recorded. These performances would seem antiquated now when the conditions of discussion have so much changed, but they show remarkable industry and a determination to cultivate the whole intellectual nature. Nothing is more striking than the association of absolute mental freedom with profound spiritual conviction. Perhaps the very intensity of this conviction rendered perfect liberty possible. We see in the Protestant mystics of Germany the same independence of intellectual restraint. Belief was still strongly held, but the antipathy to sectarian distinctions was so violent, and the desire to penetrate into the essence of faith so supreme, that for the moment, at least, disbelief was divested of its terrors. Confidence is a great patron of liberality.

They who feel sure of the substance can afford to yield details. Channing was a Unitarian, but after the style of Norton and Palfrey, in which a large amount of philosophy and literature was mixed up with biblical theology. He was a Unitarian mainly because he believed that Unitarianism was the purest, highest, most spiritual form of Christianity. He was thoroughly convinced of the paternal character of God and the moral possibilities of man. The religion was full of hope. It stimulated every energy. It was vitally concerned in the progress of the race. It was the soul of all reform. It was closely associated in his mind with social and political improvement, with the elevation of the individual and of the mass. Certain leading ethical ideas he held fast, and insisted on a perfect compliance with them. In his interpretation of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, the first called being the Jews and the last called the Gentiles, who received as much as the children of Abraham, though of later election, he struck on the trail of F. C. Baur, the leader of the Tübingen School; but this, apparently, was a mere coincidence, not a clue to be followed to the end. Otherwise he was rather conventional, as when he accepted the received accounts of the deaths of infidels. His faith in spiritual truths was so strong that he could not conceive of any denial of them without moral suffering in the hour of weakness. His complaint of Unitarianism was that it lent itself too readily to prosaic treatment, but his appreciation of its possibilities was so warm that he easily exalted it to the rank of an ideal system. The following extracts from one of his note-books will sufficiently explain his view:—

The peculiar situation and duty of Unitarian Christians. Their simple doctrines a revelation of: (1.) a God of love, manifested by sending His Son; (2.) our immortality; (3.) our spirituality, coöperation with God, benevolence, self-improvement, and usefulness, with a heartiness which has never before been witnessed.

Again: —

The peculiar ground of Unitarians. Their respect for man's nature, their confidence in God's unbounded free mercy. Not by terror and denunciation and reproof, not by harrowing and tormenting, but by awakening hope, a love of goodness, by sympathy and love, by a feeling of real equality and fellowship; never despairing, despising, insulting, exterminating all the worst and the best, the ignorant and the learned.

A few quotations from his Diary while in the Theological School give the drift of his thought: —

The things unseen are eternal. Ought we to think much of the future eternal, — what it will be? Its good is a present good perfected. It will be a present at some time. Shall we then, too, live in the future? The good in the spiritual present is the unseen eternal.

Self-sacrifice a proof of immortality, for it is to prevent dying in the spiritual part of us that we lose the bodily part. It is proof of a power in us stronger than death.

We should long for honor, respect, but not for distinction. It is the most sublime of thoughts that so many souls are here attaining great elevation of principle and sentiment, unknown, unnoticed. Heaven is a republic; no one seeks to prop himself there on the shoulders of others. No one judges of his eminence by his superiority. This is one of the most needful sacrifices of selfishness in the very commencement of a Christian course. Notoriety, fame, admiration, acknowledgment of merit, all these must give way

to a love of excellence, a sympathy with it, a desire to honor it and bear witness to it. Willingness to be unnoticed, not indifference to respect and love, — how have one without the other?

The influence of the good remains after they are taken, as the far stars shed down their beams after they are blotted out or have changed their places.

A privilege as well as a duty to be good. We cannot will to be so and become so. We cannot have a magic wand and raise the temple. It must be built. The habits, associations, tastes, of a good mind are gradual and insensible. We are conscious of a void which no force can fill, of a want of readiness to sympathize with, detect, feel, appreciate worth, — want of delicacy, of quickness in our perceptions and emotions. There is not peace.

It is well to have responsibilities. If necessary, assume them. If you are ever going to be anything, you must take them sooner or later. If you get into the habit now, it is well for you. It will give you readiness and decision and self-reliance.

Oh, that we were wise enough never to miss an opportunity of doing duty! We cannot imagine what consequences might ensue. Each duty performed necessarily opens the opportunity for future duty, every one neglected bars our entrance. We do not, cannot, see how in full. There is a divine harmony, an adaptiveness of moral discipline, a yielding, an ebb and flow, in moral circumstances which insensibly meets the exact wants of each individual. But, in addition, its influence upon others' opinion of us we can see. And again, upon our view of ourselves. A remembered duty is a straw, at least, to pluck at when we are sinking in despair. Perhaps what seems a straw may be a cord. A chance is given of salvation by each such act, a new confidence given in our own powers.

Why should not Right be the supreme power in the universe as well as Love? Love can communicate only good.

In communicating itself it does not give much, although affection is good in itself. But when blind is often as disagreeable as pleasant, as injurious as beneficial. The highest good which love can bestow is rectitude; a whole new order of emotions both to ourselves and others is created, a higher self-love, a deeper sympathy. Love amalgamates and absorbs. Right gives individuality. But it is the condition of fullness of love that it should be discriminating.

Still we are unprofitable servants. Do your utmost, and then do more. But not wildly, not desultorily; steadily and wisely; judiciously, not passionately; with sober conviction, not with headlong impulse.

There is no true reverence in throwing ourselves upon the Almighty. Seek faith by virtue. He will be faithful to you; aid you more than you dare ask or think.

Religion never was intended to be a luxury any more than friendship. Our sublime privilege is to have these relations and feelings towards the Infinite One. But we must win His regard, we must wish His approval, not because He is the arbiter of our lot, but because He is so truly great and good. We can win this regard only as we win the respect of good men, by steadiness of virtuous endeavor, not by indulgence of feeling.

Deceive not thyself by the hope of doing something in different circumstances and a future time. Now and here act out, and thus perfect, the nascent power in your soul.

Difficulty is something to be met, not avoided. It is our opportunity for self-elevation, as danger was an opportunity to the knight of honor. We cannot excuse ourselves by the plea of unfitness, being greater than we could bear, etc. Do your utmost is the rule. The rest is comparatively nothing. A great deal is gained, and gained forever, to yourself and the whole moral universe if you have been faithful. You are a sentry, perhaps on the outskirts, but the powers of darkness might pour themselves in through you. Be true, then; die at your post.

If we were perfectly loyal to conscience, to obey duty the moment it called, and thus form the habit of self-government instead of indulgence, how happy we should be! Many and most live on with a half consciousness that they are either wrong or not wholly right, with an under-current of dissatisfaction running through their souls that makes all the waters of life turbid.

There are three constituent elements of our spiritual being; they must work together: intellect, affections, will; truth, love, duty; reason, propriety, prudence. Not all the knowledge in the world will make us either affectionate or upright. Active exercise of the affections and will can alone do this.

Follow your light; you cannot dream whither it will lead you and others through you. Each one of us, when faithful, is God's common friend, a prophet. Jesus was not allowed to see the full sublime result of his ministry.

The only true glory is to be the instrument of God, one and a part of this grand machinery. Be good, self-unconscious, disinterested.

There is nothing hidden that shall not be known. Why try to appear great when we are little, or anything but exactly what we are? Even supposing no higher motive than self-interest, in the long run we must be made known.

God cannot be flattered. The only way to win His favor is by manliness. *Never was there a prayer for aid so eloquent as courage.*

He has gone to his fathers, to join the great, the learned, the good, the friends who have passed away.

View nothing as trifling, isolated, accidental, unimportant. Every event is but an expression of some eternal law, is the result of an infinite chain of causes, is fraught with momentous consequences.

This mortal shall put on immortality, this corruptible shall put on incorruption. The same nature to be transmitted. Our happiness is the agreeable emotion of any

faculty rightly exercised ; of course our true happiness can come only from the full action of our full perfected faculties. Happiness is incidental to true excellence, but excellence in its nature must be disinterested ; therefore, happiness-seeking is impolitic, and implies necessary disappointment.

Our definition of sin is different from the Calvinists'. We see a moral evil which is not sin. Our definition of punishment is different. We see suffering which is not penalty. Our definition of death is different. We suppose it refers to the loss of moral light, life, simplicity, truth, and energy, not the corporeal dissolution.

The true worship is obedience, health, wisdom, sympathy, conscientious energy.

The value of institutions is that they are rallying points, strongholds, memorials, standards, landmarks, guides.

The efficacy of prayer is a mysterious thing. God, it is said, will do what is for the best without our praying. Yes, but is it not plain that what might be best without our praying may not be best after we have prayed ? Whether for ourselves or others, it introduces a new element. It may fit us more for receiving benefit. Again, God will not aid us in any apparently miraculous manner, we may depend. It will seem to be through the operation of natural power, through our common affections.

The perfection of temper is the union of love with reason, of free impulse with perfect control, — possible though difficult. It is wholly disinterested, self-forgetful. The supremacy of right in the soul is the origin of it. It looks at once upward to God and round on men. It is full of wisdom, sympathy, and efficiency. Jesus is the model.

Spiritual freedom is a mysterious thing. Is it not probable that through this part of our nature supernatural aid is given ? How strange is the increase of power, the spontaneous upspringing of thought and feeling and energy,

when we resolve to do right! It is the Holy Spirit always pleading with us, taking occasion of the events of life to warm and animate us. Yet we must be willing, must yield to it, obey it. It does not force us. I differ from the Calvinists only in thinking that this grace is continual, that a man can open his heart to it at any time, that it will not be effectual without his coöperation.

Go ye into all nations and preach the gospel to every creature. Yes, great philanthropist, universal friend, infinite benefactor, self-sacrificer, saviour, example, preach to every creature, the ignorant and learned, the good and bad, the gospel: glad tidings of a Father, of a way to be reconciled to Him, of a mode of perfection, of final happiness; glad tidings of victory over evil, of successful struggle, hope, encouragement, advice, example, a pathway to guide, a home in sight.

There are disquisitions about the Deity, Jesus Christ, Natural and Revealed Religion, essays on the Moral Nature, papers on Free Will, Providence, Personality, Phrenology, lists of books on mythology, studies on the early heretics, on the Gnostics, on the Fathers, a refutation of Hume, — all acute, conscientious, learned, sometimes original and striking, never indifferent or careless. He was ever in earnest, ever thinking, meditating. Even his boyish lucubrations, which he would have consigned to the flames as “inconceivably dull,” saying, “It is humbling enough to discover what a blatant ass I was at sixteen,” show marks of intellect that are very remarkable in so young a man, and some of the later speculations are quite extraordinary for depth of view. A few extracts from papers prepared in the Theological School are necessary as showing the native transcendentalism of his mind. It is clear from these incipient ideas,

from the spirit of his criticism, from the style of his argument, from the stamp of his conclusions, that he was an idealist in the grain, that his socialism even existed in germ long before it was openly proclaimed.

A person looks back into past history, and he finds that the moral evils which have left their print of blood and of blackness on the record of the past are properly and necessarily a part of the whole scheme; he knows that the tempest has produced the present serenity; and seeing and knowing this, he defends wars as safety-valves of society. But there is an obvious fallacy in such reasoning. Circumstances may have rendered necessary in the past what may never again be so. Circumstances have rendered excusable what would now be atrocious, etc. Again, it is nothing but mad presumption, in mole-eyed man, to choose evil for the sake of ultimate good. If Omniscience in its wide survey of universal and eternal relations permits what seems a good to prove an evil, it is well. Faith tells us that nothing in the created universe is lawless or discrepant: the storm and the sunshine are the result of far-reaching, multiplied, and complex causes in the moral as in the physical universe; the ultimate well-being of the whole is the end. The will of Providence is the law of change and progress. But let him remember evil was chosen, not as evil, but as good, and it was only because so chosen it has produced its benefits. Let him, then, never hypocritically and with presumptuous policy dare to disobey the great moral law of aiming at good. If war is necessary, it will come. Duty calls on him to do all he can to prevent it. So with private and personal sins.

It is singular that a man should ever have made the distinction between himself and a brute to be that the latter was guided by instinct. All that is most noble in man is instinctive. Characters the most perfectly human are those formed amid stirring scenes, in which action has left

little time for self-reflection, and which have known the good only by an instinct of the heart, and the wise only by an instinct of judgment. The impulses of the heart are all instinctive. We know truth from falsehood when circumstances are laid before us by instinct. What is the demanding a cause adequate to an effect but an intellectual instinct? What is a perception of beauty but an instinct? The principles of taste are all instinctive. What are gratitude and love but instincts, which, in a healthy mind, spring just as instinctively as the blood in the vessels of the body, just as much by an inward law, not originated by us or directly under our power, as the tides follow the attraction of the moon.

I think the will different in different individuals, different at different seasons of life; of course subject to circumstances and capable of education. It is that part of our nature of which experience is the aliment and nutriment, and its own action the source of growth and strength. It is that part of our nature which makes truly moral beings; the education of which is the purpose of our present life, its actions, joys, and sufferings. It is not alone our whole selves; it is alone nothing, but is interwoven with our whole nature—growing with it, yet fashioning it, exerting a reciprocal influence, the source of life, the characteristic element, the specific quality. There is, then, a philosophy of Man.

I look at a globe, and I perceive it is round. I look at a box, and I perceive it is square. Now the ideas of a circle and a parallelogram may be awakened in my mind, or those of a sphere and a cube. But it is quite evident that the sight of these material objects was the occasion, not the cause, of these ideas; that the properties of a square, or a cube, or a circle, or a sphere, are not perceived, but are recognized in the reason. These properties exist only in reason, and in their essence are spiritual. They might have arisen without the objects in which these ideas are now

bodied forth, having been presented to the vision. A circle can never be anything but a circle. Why? Because the law of this circle is spiritual, is reason, and is just as eternal in its nature. It is useless, therefore, to talk about the mind's being material, or of the reason—that is the power of understanding law, principles, qualities, proportions—being derived from sensations; it is antecedent to all sensation, just as the Supreme is antecedent to creation.

How few of all this immense crowd have a definite hope! It is necessary to provide food and raiment for themselves and natural dependents. A sense of the irksomeness and slavishness and unworthiness of dependence, of love of freedom and power to gratify your tastes and wishes and pleasures, a dislike of inferiority, a love of influence, an honest self-respect, spontaneous activity, the quiet happiness of honest industry, the weariness of vacancy and idleness, sense of duty, benevolence, patriotism, but most of all the influence of habit and surrounding example, lead to all this scrambling and climbing and creeping and onward pressing after wealth. The real good done is that in every class of life and variety of circumstance character is developed and trained, convictions in life are formed, social ties woven, trusts confided, duties imposed, temptations met, which make a man a human being, which unfold his intellect, his power of comprehending, judging, willing, acting, of suffering, hoping, loving. Suppose now it were possible to destroy these indefinite, complicated, yet efficient motives, and substitute the feeling with which a higher being must look down upon human affairs,—a full belief, for instance, that Providence has placed us here to labor in order to perfect our natures; that temptations are useful as opportunities for us to form virtuous desires and habits; that friendships and dear social relations were formed in order to develop certain emotions and affections, and to lay upon us certain duties; that in doing all that

men did, it was for improving society and carrying on a great work ; would it not in the first place need great faith and intellectual power to make a person act upon such principles, and, secondly, would not the head be developed at the expense of the heart ; would not men be much more like self-moved automaton than human beings ? The only everlasting and eternal things, the only things worth being acquainted with, would be the manifestations and revelations of God's will and purposes and character in the natural phenomena and human feelings.

One man walking before another is no cause, nor is the second an effect ; antecedence in no sort fills up the idea of a cause. I think that the first idea of a cause is drawn from an experience and conviction of our own power of voluntary action. It is remarkable how childhood and common language ascribe to outward changes an intelligence, power, will, purpose. I am much mistaken if in every mind all names for existing objects are not in some way personified. . . . The child attributes moral emotions to the wind. It says, "The *naughty* wind *blew* down the *poor* tree."

Now Hume defines belief as merely a vivid conception, as it appears to me quite unphilosophically. He starts with his theory of ideas and impressions, and tries to square everything to it. Now it is evident that belief is one of the innate laws of our nature, derived from no outward impression. Our first instinct is to believe our senses ; we afterwards discover that they may deceive us, and then we come to the ideas of probabilities, evidence, proofs.

What is gravitation but the agency of Deity ? What is matter but His agency ? What is life, what is the body, that is organized to-day, but His agency ? It is not merely juxtaposition, which changes the apparent qualities of bodies. There is a change in themselves ; yes, even in the primitive atoms of matter. The cold wind breathes upon

the water, and the crystal shoots across it. How? The wind is air in motion; cold is nothing real, but negative; this wind is deficient in heat. What is heat? Nobody knows whether it is anything real, or merely a law of motion or position. Water is kept fluid by this heat; heat escapes, and the crystal shoots, all by certain principles; but what principles? Not laws written in some statute book at the beginning of creation, but laws present and acting, a legislator who executes; and what is this but the spirit of that great Being whose thoughts are creative, whose will is deed? But what is water? Matter in particular juxtaposition and relation. You find in it the same gases which the stone is composed of, or the tree, or the animal. What makes it water? Again some inherent, living law. There is nothing so solid that it might not be volatilized in such a manner that no human sense could detect its presence. All is mystery. Great Creator, we feel Thy presence though we see Thee not; our heart and our conscience prophesy to us of thine infinity, but the eye of the understanding cannot perceive the ever-present divinity.

It is quite evident that in most actions the strongest motive decides our conduct. If motives make the man and not the man the motives, there is evidently, I say, no responsibility. A man is no more to be blamed for yielding to some strong, swelling passion than the bank of a canal is for sinking before the pressure of the water, unless he has had something to do with the increase of that passion, either directly by opening the fountains that feed it, or not checking the thousand streams that circumstance poured into it. But how has he been instrumental? He no more originated the passion in the first place than he does now. It is spontaneous and inherent. But there was never a time when he was tempted, — yes, even now, — when, if asked the question whether he must obey it, he could not with his lips, if he would, have answered “no,” and when

his heart, whether he would or not, did not so answer for him. But why should he have withstood it? Why? And the "why" implies a motive. That motive was some impulse which he knew by an instinct as sure as that by which he knows sweet from bitter, and knows that one is more pleasant than the other; which he knows, I say, to be a higher, a nobler, a more worthy impulse. This I assert as a fact in human nature, which no filtering or pounding or any mode of operating in the metaphysical laboratory can destroy. But it is equally an undeniable fact that in proportion as he has been in the habit of withstanding or yielding to the passion, so will be the proportion of effort necessary now to withstand it. In proportion as other higher motives in the conscience and the judgment, as purer feelings in the heart and distincter conceptions in the understanding, are at hand to prop him up and support, so will be the ease with which he will stand while the fierce tide of temptation lashes itself into peace. In early years there is difference both in the strength of temptation, in the power of resistance, in the perception of guilt, in the motives to do and the motives to withhold. And habit is probably first formed not sinfully but carelessly and ignorantly. Afterwards comes experience to strengthen the judgment, higher impulses to work and direct; conscience and reason are loosed from the film which shrouded their vision. We have a will, whose natural sovereign is conscience, and, however mysterious, we all feel ourselves responsible, not merely by education, tradition, usage, public opinion, but instinctively and in our heart.

Where God is there is heaven, and God is everywhere. Heaven is all that is perfect, all that is beautiful, true, good; heaven lies about us now and ever. The first love of a child is an opening avenue to heaven. Its earliest joyous impulses, its inward longings, its growth of spirit, its warm wide interests are heaven. . . . And as we pass on through life, every thought of purity, every upright purpose, every

generous feeling, every noble effort, every disinterested sacrifice, every gentle grace, are heaven. . . . The infinite universe is heaven to the spiritually minded. . . .

The only intelligence, power, love, we can imagine are like our own. Most sublime is the hope that all earth's joys and sorrows, labors and cares, beauties and wonders, are developing man in the image of his Maker; every effort of mind is bringing us nearer his inconceivable intelligence; every free outpouring of pure feeling is opening our hearts in the likeness of his unchanging love; every struggle of our will is unfolding our wills in faint resemblance to his spontaneous energy. In the endless future open before the progressive, who can conceive what these spirits of ours may become! But on earth, to a human*body, God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways. In all the beauty which his taste has so prodigally scattered through the universe, in all the happiness which his goodness has given birth to, in all the contrivances of his wisdom, in all the unceasing operations of his power, we would seek Him and adore Him. We would combine in our idea of God all that is lovely and happy and grand and efficient. Through the unfolding of our own power we rise to imperfect conceptions of the all wise and powerful; an observation of great human minds elevates our ideas of the infinite mind. But what, after all, does the immensity of Nature and all her beauty, and the wonderful variety and exquisite harmony of existence, and the observation of all human intelligence and the consciousness of our own, give us of that awful, all-comprehending, unerring intellect, of that power which never is weary and never at rest?

We are never allowed to see anything supernatural in the course of events. God acts through natural laws in their natural operation. God is all truth, all order, all good. Providence is acting through good everywhere. . . . We cannot believe that God is far away, forgetful, indifferent. If He does not act, it is best He should not. But

if He does, this mode is the only conceivable one, the only one which consciousness approves. It will do a man no injury to consider all his good, his pure, his happy states as inspired.

Piety is often a morbid sentiment, engrossing and delusive. True piety is more than contemplation or thanksgiving or adoration or vow ; it is obedience. It is not absorbing, but enlarging. It gives an interest in all, a sensibility to all good, a judgment and soundness of reason, an efficiency and prudence in action. It loves God in his works ; it sees Him in all beauty and excellence. . . . God has no personal love of affection and honor except as He is the all worthy ; and affection and honor for Him is the source of spiritual life to his children.

It is the tendency of Unitarian opinions to make devotion a practical sentiment ; to connect religion with social duties and all the labors of life ; to give respect, sympathy, hope for man, a patient resignation and adoring confidence in God. . . . We speak of the *tendency* of Unitarianism, meaning something different from its professed aim, because all religions in the professed end of life must nearly coincide. But where a religion places the piety of devotional acts and feelings above the piety of universal obedience ; where it looks for any means of salvation beyond the state of the mind and heart, as God's various providences and revealed will may influence its faithful effort ; where the end of man's perfection, his capacity for improvement, his spiritual kindred to the author of all minds, is kept out of view, religion almost necessarily passes more or less into superstition, becomes something peculiar and distinct from common human experience ; religious emotions are not the simple human emotions ; religious thoughts and acts are not daily, hourly thoughts and acts ; religion has a place, instead of dwelling everywhere, pervading all ; its language becomes distinct and peculiar ; its interests are separated from ordinary interests. . . . It becomes virtu-

ous to live out of the world instead of above the world while in it.

These are remarkable sayings, not merely on account of their extraordinary maturity of thought, so far beyond the usual mark of the Divinity School, but also as forecasting the man's future opinions. There is not much distance, after all, between these sentiments of the youth of twenty-two and those of the man of seventy. The experience of years will explain it all. Here is the freedom, the enthusiasm, the aspiration. Here is the idea of social regeneration, of free and universal religion, of Christianity as the faith of progress, of Christ as the inspirer, of God as the father of all men. Here is the undogmatic, uneccelesiastical temper, the warm, large sympathy with thinking of opposite schools, the hopefulness that grew more and more triumphant as time went on; and here, we may add, is the invincible idealism that insisted on seeing a divine side to human life, that found in all evil universal and premeditated good.

At the Divinity School, about 1833, Channing read an essay before the Philanthropic Society, on "The Effects produced upon Congregational Churches and Ministry by Recent Changes in the Laws of the Commonwealth, and the Duties of Ministers in Consequence." After narrating the course of legislation in favor of the voluntary system, and stating the practical consequences of that system on the religious concerns of society, he concludes that the third article of our Bill of Rights (which imposes a tax on each member of the community, for the support of the ministry) ought to be abolished, in the interests of pure religion; that the voluntary method is the only just way of sus-

taining ministers; that the profession will, in consequence of it, be no longer a routine business, profitable to idlers and drones; that clergymen will be put on their mettle and compelled to be learned, earnest, humane, devoted, spiritually minded; that the minister should counteract the danger of too exclusive a dependence on his supporters, by gaining a portion, at least, of his livelihood by labor in some other calling, which shall be innocent, such as farming. This too was a conviction. Mr. Channing was never rich or anything like it, but he never complained of his poverty, and never repined because he did not get a living out of the Gospel.

It would not be fair to quote passages from the pages upon pages of self-depreciation that fill the earlier diaries of college life, but neither would it be fair to omit mention of a quality which distinguished him all through his career. Though prophetic in the assurance of his utterance, bold in the expression of his convictions, joyous in his anticipations of good, he was personally distrustful. His confidence was in the truth, not in himself as the proclaimer of it. He knew he had talents, but he aimed at placing them entirely at the service of the Eternal. At first the effort involved a struggle with details of experience the record of which is strained and melancholy; but at last this painful look disappeared, and the sweep of great principles bore all thought of self away. He could even speak, and honestly too, of sacrifice as "an all-sufficing joy." The abasement of his school-days became the devotion of a faithful servant in mature life. His very sense of powerlessness left him. His misgivings seem to have been spiritual rather than critical. The letters of his

uncle, his own sermons, which show no trace of mental conflict, his lofty, serene conduct, his impassioned earnestness, all forbid the notion that at this time his belief in Christianity was impaired. His interest was mainly in problems of the inner life, in questions of humanity, in matters of philosophical concern.

At this time the problem of negro slavery was much discussed, though the agitation had by no means become wide. The young man, though bitterly prejudiced against the Abolitionists and their methods, made it the subject of earnest thought, as the following papers attest. They are without date, but belong to the period between 1831 and 1833.

NEGRO SLAVERY.

What can be done. Plans. (1.) Colonize them. (2.) Free them here. (3.) Form a state of them. (4.) Keep them in slavery till they rebel; then (5.) Exterminate them. To free them here would be in the first instance destructive to them and to others. Enormities unheard of, entire overthrow of police regulations, must ensue. Prisons filled, houses guarded, war in peace. They could live only by pillage, without lands, without occupation. Murders, bloodshed, persecution, extermination, cruelty, the necessary consequences. This if they were freed unconditionally. They would not remain as tenants. But even if they would, what is to be the future condition of the free blacks? Can we consent to their remaining an inferior caste? Yet this would happen, however gradually they were freed. Immediate abolition out of the question from mercy to all and justice to all. Gradual emancipation, for them to remain among us, out of the question, if they are still to remain an inferior caste. Either they must be colonized, or a free black state made, or they must be admitted to equal rights, to community. Now this last is certainly not desirable,

even were it possible. Colonization is doubtful. To form them into a political state difficult. Must be gradual. (1.) Difficult to make the masters assent to it. (2.) Difficult to make the blacks patiently acquiesce in and forward it. (3.) Difficult to prepare them for it. (4.) Difficult to preserve them in it. Yet consider the great number, the rapid increase, the jealousy of the master, the suspicions of the slave, the difficulty of transportation, the difficulty of locating and supporting, the questionable right of compelling them to go and Africa to receive them, the great funds required, the length of time necessary, and one doubts of the colonization scheme. Besides, it strengthens slavery for the time; it undoubtedly is supported by some with that view; it will be ineffectual till slave-holders acquiesce in it.

Is anything to be done? Are we to wait for Providence? Its call will never come to us directly. It will manifest itself only in the minds of men. But the gradual development of circumstances! Shall it begin with us or with the slaves? Does not Providence act through our minds?

This shows reflection and interest, to say the least.

SLAVERY.

The alternatives: (Colonization, impossible.) (Forming a state, doubtful.) (Perpetuation of the system.) (Abolition.) Is anything to be done? To obtain light, gain knowledge, form opinions, digest plans, prepare funds, gain friends. We can do nothing without the aid of the slave-owners. Can we interest them? Will they come to consider it themselves? Shall we interfere and delay the time? Shall we produce a separation? Educate the slaves with a view to abolition, or not? Advantage of societies to attract attention, interest reasonable men, produce union, system. Danger, that practical and zealous men will wish to do something. Patience necessary to do away the

idea of property, substitute that of guardianship, produce a fellow feeling, respect, sympathy, sense of religious obligation.

Again : —

I. Is slavery to be perpetual? No. II. Can colonization dispose of them? (1.) The time. (2.) The cost. (3.) The destruction of life. (4.) The right. (5.) The claim of the laboring class. (6.) The right to put them into Africa. (7.) The probability, the number, impracticable. III. What then? Settle in the South? Probably. Danger of insurrection. Are the Southerners any nearer to it now than before? Is there hope? IV. Abolition. Legally, by police measures; gradually; education; individual effort; general movement. Can you do it without their (the slaveholders') aid? Ought you to think of it? Then first their coöperation. We to persuade and convince. (1.) To show some feasible scheme, that it is for the interest of both parties. (2.) To convince them of the sin of holding property in flesh. (3.) To satisfy them the blacks are men. How? By intimidation? No. By denunciation? No. By address to feelings? No. Conscience? No. Reason? Yes. (4.) Have we a right to interfere by moral means? Yes, anywhere and everywhere; not only right, but duty, whenever we can be of service; but here really we have a stake, an interest, commercially, politically. V. Then is it expedient? Are they the best judges? Self-interest, religion. They close their eyes to it, are afraid of it, are not cool. Shall we hinder them? Those who are good will sympathize; those who are bad we make no worse. Yet this is not wholly true. Jealousy. Liability to disunion not more than to continue. Opposite interests inevitable. This will somewhat increase. Advantage of societies bringing many men to bear; men, worthy, sensible men. Give them your sanction and name. Surprisingly little interest. Yes, but if they will not hear us, get them into discussion. What

feeling wanted? Not excitement. Calm, deep, solemn question. Sympathy with the slave-owner. What can he do? Sympathy with the slave.

What is meant by immediate abolition? (1.) To give up the claim of property. (2.) The defense of slavery as a perpetuity. (3.) To speak of it as an evil to be remedied as soon as possible. (4.) Immediately to devise means to accomplish the speedy, universal, and safest abolition. (5.) To abate at once the evils. (6.) To place the slaves under law. (7.) To grant them certain rights, — domestic, intellectual, moral, personal. Plan in Tennessee for the State to buy all the slaves. Gradual Emancipation Society in Kentucky. No interference in legislation, no use of force.

In 1834 — one year after leaving the Divinity School, and one year before the famous “Garrison riot,” which fired the heart of Wendell Phillips — he joined the Cambridge Antislavery Society, members of which were Henry Ware, Sidney Willard, Charles Follen, Henry Ware, Jr., Levi Farwell, Artemas B. Muzzey, Charles T. Brooks, Frederick H. Hedge, John Owen, John Livermore. The object was to give effect to the antislavery sentiment of the community. A real conviction of the inhumanity of slavery was at the bottom of it. There was a strong aversion to the methods of Garrison and his companions, and Mr. Ware wrote a letter, printed in the “Life” of Garrison (I. 463), to the effect that this Cambridge Society was formed as a counter-demonstration. This may be so; it was, plainly, Mr. Ware’s own conception of it. But two of the members assure me that such was not the avowed purpose when they signed. Mr. Ware was one of its originators; Mr. Channing came in later, and it is possible that the original

motive had been superseded, though this is not very likely, as the organization lasted but about a year. It is not probable that the design went so far as Mr. Channing afterwards approved, but it was bold then, and although behind the opinions of leading Abolitionists, was in advance of the general feeling. Mr. Garrison did not take up his position of "No Union with Slave-holders" till nearly ten years later. The efforts to extend the slave dominion were not made before 1845, so that this movement deserves to be placed among the earliest that strove to awaken the general intelligence in regard to this iniquity. There are several references to the Abolitionists, who seemed to him then mischief-makers, doing more harm than good to the cause. Mrs. Child made him an anti-colonizationist in 1833. And it is but just to say that he put "shame" and "alas" against some of his early utterances on this subject. While at the Divinity School he wrote a paper on the means of removing slavery, of which that portion only relating to colonization is preserved. This is thorough and earnest. He sees plainly the weak points of the movement, how it plays into the hands of the slave-holders, how superficial its action is; and while he concedes its good faith, has no hope of it as a way of deliverance from the curse of bondage.

On the whole, the life at the Divinity School was crowded with thinking; and when it is remembered that, owing to a failure of sight, he was obliged to spend the winter of 1831 in Philadelphia, the work done must be pronounced extraordinary. His letters from there, gay, sparkling, gossipy as they are, give no indication of his Cambridge pursuits. Once he speaks of talking about religion, Cousin's metaphys-

ics, Coleridge, with Rev. Mr. Tyng, but his work as a student of divinity is not alluded to.

The life of a theological student is peculiar in this respect, that it does not serve as a preparation for the career which is to follow. There is a good deal of learning in ecclesiastical and dogmatical matters, but there is no knowledge of men, and there is no knowledge in the business of applying divine truth. The views of religion are speculative. Christianity presents its ideal side. Human beings are disembodied, and are moralized on as the objects of a supernatural influence. It seems a wonder that the world is not converted, so reasonable are the arguments, so invincible are the ideas. The kingdom of heaven hovers in the air, waiting to descend, and all that people need is to see it in its beauty, in order to welcome it eagerly. In a Unitarian school the dream is a bright vision of the morning. The gospel is glad tidings indeed, of great joy. The divine message of peace and good-will shines with beneficence. The dignity of all created nature, the loving character of God, the celestial humanity of Jesus, the hope of an eternal progression for every soul, is expected to captivate all listening ears; and the young men go forth, full of cheerful courage, as apostles of a fresh revelation of light to a waiting earth.

On leaving the Divinity School he read a paper on the "Dangers to be guarded against in the Study of Polemic Divinity." The essay is remarkable for the candor of its tone, for its charity, and for its appreciation of central ideas. The earnestness of the old disputants is conceded; the essential unity of conviction is maintained.

The intellect is selfish, vain, skeptical, intolerant; the

heart is liberal and humble. He could never be an angry disputant who felt deeply the life-giving energy, the cheering consolations of his cherished faith. . . . Free inquiry is a valley of darkness and stumbling, and the most shudder to pass through it alone. . . . Let the private inquirer follow the light of his own reason, and solemnly resolve to let no trifling disputations lead him from his path.

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IV.

FIRST EXPERIMENTS — THE DARK VALLEY — EMERGENCE.

AT that time great interest was felt by the messengers of the new faith in the West. The cry was about the spiritual wants of that region, and young men, with fresh enthusiasm, were convinced that Unitarianism, the broadest version of Christianity, the purest, freest, most ideal system of religion, would come to its full proportions only in the wide reaches of the younger States. The new creed, it was urged, required for its development a new expanse. The East, such was the impression, was narrow, prejudiced, cramping, committed to old ideas, old methods, old traditions, old ecclesiastical and theological standards. The genius of liberal Christianity demanded an untrammelled humanity, original, independent, looking to the future. The doctrines were all encouraging, stimulating, cheerful. They fell in with social enterprise, and led man on in a natural course to heights of attainment hitherto unattempted.

Animated by such anticipations of glory, a little knot of men at Cambridge resolved, when their course of theological study was over, that they would go far away from New England. Among these was William Eliot, James Freeman Clarke, and William Henry Channing. Eliot went to St. Louis, and Clarke to Louisville, but Channing stayed at home. His as-

signed reason was a sense of duty to his mother and sister, in whose happiness he was bound up, and who were unwilling he should go far off unless he felt a strong impulse to do so, as he did not. He was self-distrustful, wavering in purpose, conscious of imperfect faith; too little moved by emotion, faint-hearted, intellectual. His inclination to remain in or about Boston was confirmed by his uncle William, who wrote to his mother under date of April 10, 1833:—

I have little fear about William. He is faithful to his principles, has a generous standard, and will put himself forth wherever he is. You think that he grows rather slowly. That is not a bad sign. It promises a longer, surer growth. I incline that he should begin his labors nearer home, because it seems to me that he has a mind which will be more understood and which will work more naturally in a state of society somewhat cultivated than at the West. I think, too, that experience, mature judgment, is more needed in new than in old settlements. In the last there are conventional rules, old habits, which secure a young man against improprieties. In the first he will meet strange circumstances to throw him on his own resources and to compel him to experiments, which a mind unused to the world will find anything but easy. Still I would say to William, if no sphere of usefulness opened near home, go abroad, and the result might prove that the difficulties I have named are the best discipline for him. I am not, however, willing to send him abroad without some necessity or some plain call of Providence. I incline that he should make a trial at Brattle Street. As to his success I am doubtful, nor am I at all anxious that he should succeed. But should he suit that people, I think he will do them good and be as happy as he ought to be. William will make no greater efforts at first than he can sustain, so that there will be no disappointment of expectation. The pressure of

such a parish, and indeed of any parish, must be at first severe. It is the peculiarity of our profession that all our duties come *at once* on a young man. He cannot creep into them gradually, as a young lawyer and physician do into theirs. This has its compensation, however. A spring is sometimes given to the mind, for which it is the better ever after.

But no divine call sent him in any direction. After preaching in a few towns, the decision lay between two places, the society at the "North End" (Hanover Street) and that meeting in Brattle Street. The former he left to his classmate Chandler Robbins, who pleased the people, and later accepted a unanimous invitation to become their minister. The latter he was little drawn to, as the people were little drawn to him. Nine or ten of his written sermons are preserved. They are simple, direct, persuasive, upon spiritual themes without exception, and entirely free from moral exaggeration. It is wonderful that they did not charm congregations. Perhaps they did. It is possible that an instinctive dread of routine and confinement, a desire for fresh air, determined him not to respond to any overtures from Boston.

The following extracts from a letter to Mr. Clarke, written on September 24, 1833, will explain his feelings:—

I have preached three Sundays at Brattle Street and one at the North End, with little satisfaction to myself and little benefit, I fear, to others. In October I am to preach again at Brattle Street, and in the event of their being pleased with my services I have determined to go there for a year on trial. This is all that I will engage to do. I feel too uncertain as to my own capacity for usefulness, both as a preacher and pastor and active philanthropist, and too cer-

tain that the people can know absolutely nothing about me, to be willing to make any definite arrangement. . . . It is not improbable that you may soon hear of me as stationed for six months or a year in some of our neighboring towns. . . . But I feel more and more the importance of our profession, and a more hearty self-devotion to its duties.

In October of the same year the darkness has increased : —

I cannot feel truth so deeply as to be truly inspired to express it. I cannot even express what I feel with any force. I grumble at being forced to develop what I believe to be true in the principle. I get sick to death of my work before it is half commenced, and when it is done have no faith that it will do any good. All seems so weak in conception, in illustration, in conclusion, so cold, so barren. . . . I cannot bear to get up in a pulpit and read to persons some poor thoughts on themes to them and me of infinite moment, especially when I know I do but dream of, not see them. I do but imagine, not feel them. Yet I am thankful I can say . . .

He tells the same friend, October 26th : —

At present I am in a melancholy mood. . . . You prophesied rightly that I should not be a popular preacher. But it is a fault of mind, not of expression or manner. I have lived too long in mere abstractions. Persons have and ought to have little sympathy with my disquisitions. I shall mend as I come more among living men. My heart tells me I am capable of something better, and, God willing, that something shall not be always latent. . . . The brightest prospect is that of freedom from the whole business.

In December he revives a little : has been to Leicester, where his friend Samuel May was afterwards settled ; has written two sermons with which he is better satisfied than with any of his former attempts, be-

cause they came more from the heart, and were aimed at the hearts of living men ; but says : —

For myself I am indolent, and therefore unhappy. . . . Where I shall be I do not know.

He has the warmest praises for other men, Clarke, Robbins, Eliot, but nothing save condemnation for himself. In January, 1834, he avows himself a convert to spiritual Christianity ; pronounces a eulogy on Unitarianism ; predicts its future success ; is ready to devote his energies to its diffusion ; declares that the gloom of doubt has passed away.

In the spring of 1834 he all but resolves to abandon his profession. His cousin and intimate companion, James H. Perkins, thus wrote on the 16th of March : —

I have this morning received a letter from my cousin, William Channing, which has given me much pain. He has been educated for the ministry and has but just begun to preach, but he had too high a standard of that excellence which should be a Christian minister's, and, dissatisfied and disappointed, he has left the profession. He has a mind of the finest cast, and a most excellent character ; he has faults, strong ones, but he overrates them. It has made me sad to hear of his determination, because it will bitterly disappoint his mother, who has no other son, as well as all his other friends, and worse still will cast him loose and aimless upon the world at an age when he should be independent, without means of support and without employment. . . . These news have destroyed the beauty of the spring to me, for a time. I know from experience how withering his struggles must be ; the agony that comes from a want of confidence in one's own powers and virtue is the worst agony that man ever feels. . . . When I begin to doubt my own worthiness it is like the cloud of death, — all my powers, all my hopes wither, and the presence of Death himself would be a blessing to me.

Fortunately it did not go so far as Mr. Perkins feared. Dr. Channing writes to the mother on March 24th :—

I received a letter from William at New York in a tone of despondence. You can judge of his feelings better than I can. He ought not to yield to them. He ought not to be discouraged. He has not made sufficient trial to authorize an immediate decision. I hope to hear from him.

The sequel is given in a letter of May 6th to Samuel May :—

This winter I have been yet more sadly depressed than even when I was at New Bedford. In fact I preached my last sermon at New York, solemnly promising to myself, all but vowing before my God, that I would quit a profession which I felt unfit for. I went on to Washington, and drowned all recollection in political enthusiasm. Yet the scenes which there passed before me were in God's providence insensibly clearing away the gloom. There was so much little selfishness, such paltry manœuvring, such brutish insensibility to rectitude, that I felt as I never did before the sublimity of the faith whose motto is love, whose command is peace. There was need, indeed, of its healing, purifying spirit; there was need it should be preached in words of flame, to kindle all hearts. Could I, could I ever be worthy to bear its messages to these self-destroyers, these madmen, these blind guides, these slaves! Such was my state of mind when the news of my aunt's death, and in a few days more of my dearest friend's (James Jackson's), reached me. Two such pure and loving spirits passed away at once from the scene of their discipline to higher society and wider usefulness and purer light. Should I not imitate their example, try to make myself and others fit to join them and the innumerable hosts of immortals? I returned home, and the thought of all the misery I should cause by thus disappointing expectation,

the influences of renewing old occupations and associations, completed the cure !

Then follows a rapturous description of the substance of the gospel, of the nobleness of the preacher's calling, of the need of self-devotion and humanity, of his own purposes as a spiritual reformer and social deliverer. He is going to the West to develop his affections, increase his energy, stimulate his will. Henceforth there is no turning back. His methods may change, but his aim is not diverted.

His first essay was at Meadville, Pennsylvania, where Mr. Herman John (Harm Jan) Huidekoper, an enterprising and large-minded man from Holland, had established himself as agent of the Holland Land Company, with his family, consisting of his wife, three sons, and two daughters, one of whom afterwards became Mrs. Clarke, and was doing his best to spread "liberal" principles.

The Unitarians were few and not rich ; there was no meeting-house ; services were held in the court-house ; and a good deal of self-denial was imposed, in one way and another, on the representatives of the new creed. But this was rather attractive to the young enthusiast, who was thus encouraged to indulge his imagination. Everything was full of promise and the beauty of spring. The white house with the trees and honeysuckle round its piazza ; the happy, affectionate, simple family ; the new land, once disputed about, but now peacefully settled by emigrants from Germany and New York, Hollanders and Yankees, under the auspices of the Land Company, which had bought the region, all combined with the soft sky of the early summer to warm his heart. The journey thither in those days was not easy or short.

Here is a description of a scene on the Hudson, beautiful in itself, and interesting as showing his love of natural beauty : —

In the morning a sleepy southwest breeze dipped its wing at intervals on the smooth waters, and waved the light drapery that hung round the horizon ; but by nine o'clock the spirits of the clouds rolled up their tents and filed off in solid phalanx, and marshaled squadron above squadron in fleecy majesty : here in little companies dancing as they went, in the joy of their freedom ; and there a straggler or two stopped to look down on some quiet valley, or emptied his canteen into a flowing brook, or upon a bare rock, or an old deserted hut, in his frolic ; — in other words, small showers were passing at a distance. The woods are in perfect state. Here from the yellow-green of tender leaves the firs lifted their dark spires, and there the oaks shaded the bright foliage with their russet ; and the half-covered forest spread its web against the sky upon a hill-top. Add to this the sloping fields in liveliest verdure, the craggy battlements whose clumps of brushwood had made their hold, the glassy waves that run along the fields of grain, the shadows sliding down the mountain sides, the spots of light on hill and valley, the lines of molten gold upon the waters, — drink in this beauty through your eyes, then look up, up, forever, between those fleecy openings into the blue depths, bathe yourself in the pure, warm air, listen to voices tuned by happiness around you, and own how good is God !

From Schenectady to Ithaca he goes by canal-boat. Here is a description of the voyage : —

CANANDAIGUA, *June, 1834.*

I have a few hours to spend here, and as a heavy rain has converted these clayey roads into quagmires, I do not care to cover my feet with a second layer of mud. So let us have a chat as long as time and circumstances admit.

As soon as I had dispatched my letter to you I trudged up to the railroad office to pick out my luggage, but three only of my five pieces (I must tell you that I am carrying a bundle of books from Munroe to Mr. Huidekoper and a huge packet of tracts to enlighten the heathen Christians, in addition to my two trunks and bag), appeared. I took it for granted they were all aboard, and whistled along through a keen air, my thoughts hovering between the green fields around me and some sunny little rooms at Cambridge. Then came the delightful rough and tumble of unpacking which you can remember or imagine. Puffing and blowing, hot and hurried, we go on board our little packet, where all is quiet as the Sabbath. Delightful is the change from the noise and rush of the railroad to the equable motion and the slight gurgle of water in the canal. You see at once that all are content in this small sphere; no dignified, genteel servants as in the steamboats, to shame you by their superior cultivation, but one solitary son of Africa, who wears a yeoman-like simplicity; no hasty captain waiting in his box of state for the passengers whom the little bell and shrill cry summon to pay their fare, but a plain, quiet man opens the desk which stands on the mahogany table with a green cloth, in the centre of the cabin, and politely inquires, "Are you Mr. Small or Short." No, sir; Mr. Channing. "Cheney?" No, sir. "Then spell it," — a common custom with me, you know, who have had as many aliases as the worst prison bird. Certainly: and so your bill is produced, inspected, received, change returned, and your name is entered for a berth. One feels as if he were not a needy petitioner, as on board a steamboat, but a patron conferring a benefit, and his heart opens. The same tranquil air hovers over everything. The chambermaid steals in and out with a fellow-feeling, aspect, and manner, the cook occasionally shows himself with a benevolent satisfaction irradiating his dusky visage. At the consciousness of power to bless, the steward will take

your coat and hang your umbrella up. Then the cabin is cosey ; old and young ladies and gentlemen meet together, sit on the same benches, lean on the same table, look at each other, say nothing, and yet a feeling of confidence springs up, and the absurdity of artificial forms, of arbitrary distinctions, is felt instinctively. The canal-boat is the leveler up. On a shelf in one corner are ranged a few books, and you take them down and read a little and lay them aside again. You feel leisurely and good-natured, and then the tramp of the slow pacers on the deck above you beats time for your thoughts, and you have a tortoise-like confidence that give us time and we shall get along nicely. I do not know whether I have been successful in making the pleasant laziness which traveling (not inspired exactly, but) wrapped me in. I should opine, however, that if you desired to take a dose of Tophet experience a canal-boat in midsummer would be the best mode possible. We have incidents, too. First the constantly recurring one of "bridge," in the unintelligible lingo of the steersman, gives you notice to sprawl on the not quaker-clean deck, and there is a pleasant excitement in jumping, whether your own or your neighbor's head will take leave or whether your coat will be carried from your back. At all events you have the latent activity of knowing that every now and then you must do something. You win the cheap luxury of standing up by lying down, and learn for the first time what a pleasure it is not to be a son of Anak rubbing your top-knot against the clouds. Then you pass the tow-boats, and one is amused now, though he never would have been before and may never be again, to see the horses stumble over the ropes and half tumble into the canal and recover themselves and jog along ; and you stand ready to jump if the rope should sweep the deck, knowing that either a mud bath or a somewhat close embrace between the two boats awaits you if you do not clear it. Then you pass between the close stone walls of the locks and jump ashore, and

walk a mile or two, and get on board again when the boat nears the bank, and calculate rightly the length of the jump, and find you had not taken into account the forward motion, and tumble full length at the feet of some fair neighbor, or bang yourself against the steps, etc. But this is dull enough, I fear. Then comes the grand periodical incident of the meals; and this assumes an interest you never dreamed of, it is such a sure sign of a certain portion of a long job finished, a lock through which you are raised to a new level of expectation. And finally, last, rest, and once for all, the great incident of stowing away so many human bodies in layers three deep. The captain like a general counts his forces, surveys them, first come first served the rule. "Mr. Channing, 21, middle." This means that I have the right to intrude myself under a piece of bed-tick upon which the body of 21 upper is to be suspended between me and the ceiling, and have the privilege of tumbling down on Mr. 21, lower, if the slight cords which hold me should get tired, and quit duty. The pen of a Cervantes would be needed to describe the ensuing act of the drama. The grand catastrophe is the crawling out the next morning. But before this blissful consummation (for recollect, the spirits of fever and ague lurk about the cabin, ready to pounce upon the unlucky wretch, who pokes his nose for fresh air into the fog, tangible and solid, which broods over the walls of our Calcutta Black Hole, therefore he must dream of the frosty Caucasus and moonbeams, and forget the atmosphere of ninety and candles with their towering wicks, black smoke, and running tallow), before this blissful consummation of exhuming yourself the next morning, you fall asleep. Suddenly you start like Clarence, with the noise of many waters in your ears. Bubble, bubble, as if all the seething pots had united in chorus. Rush, dash, spatter, play the accompaniment. Then comes a thump, then a crunching sound as if a whale were masticating your boat for a supper. All is dark as

Erebus. Oh, turn over ; we are passing a lock ; visions of fair faces, sunburnt on a desert, seated in a ball-room, trying to look comfortable, though dreadfully uneasy ; thoughts of cooking before a Lehigh grate, of luxuriating in a dye vat, witches walking over red-hot ploughshares, martyrs at the stake, again cluster round you, when crash ! with a jar enough to waken the Seven Sleepers ; loud voices, coarse jokes, oaths, abound. We have run afoul of another boat ; good-night again, "and so on," as little Matty says, till morning. Oh ! what a blessed thing is comfort, said the Fakir when he stretched himself upon his couch of spikes. But there were many pleasures in the sail, and seriously, if the captain will warrant you a small company and cool air, I would advise you to try it. You pass through a country unequaled in beauty. The Mohawk meanders through fields of the softest green, hides himself among clumps of trees and dark forests, basks in the open sunshine, spreads his clear mirror to the overhanging precipice, ripples and foams over rapids. At some height above is the canal, and your eye traverses at a glance the whole valley. Hills swell up peacefully all around you, the woods for the most part kissing their summits, or cut in festoons to mark the outline of the bright green lawns. . . . Sheep flock the hill-sides, and cattle low forth their joy in the rich pastures. This is not highly colored. Then there were amusing and pleasing moral pictures. . . .

He then goes on to describe the talks he had with a boy, the captain of a line boat, an Irish Protestant minister, illustrating cheerily his own remark in this same letter : —

It was one more instance of what I have long believed : that the common people of this country equal their betters in stamina of mind, good sense, high feeling, even if they want the final touch of the master's chisel.

There was an impassioned argument about slavery,

in which he bore himself like an antislavery man of Dr. Channing's type.

At Buffalo he meets with an atheist, an engineer.

A man of great information, much natural talent, a most virtuous character, wide experience, for he has traveled everywhere in this country and Europe. He is one of the greatest traders here, and a most respectable citizen. The most active and enterprising, the most intelligent and efficient, in many cases the most virtuous men in the place, are infidels in fact, if not in profession. The young men follow in the same track. But observe it is the infidelity of ignorance and indifference, not of licentiousness.

On the ride back from Niagara Falls he meets a deist, a bitter foe of the clergy, a Mason and anti-temperance man, "the best carpenter in the United States." He was a Dutchman, "enormous, round-headed, beer-barreled, in velveteen, hot, laughing, obstinate, and passionate."

He arrived at Meadville on the 13th of June. The first view of it from the steamer on the lake was delightful. The little town, with churches and houses among the green trees, lay in a valley through which French Creek ran. Rounded hills embraced it on every side, partly cleared. The valley was laid out in cultivated farms. An occasional orchard plot broke the monotony of the scene; alder-trees grew by the fences; at intervals an elm or sycamore hung over the stream. The sky was intensely blue, there were shining clouds enough to throw a shadow now and then and veil the almost too dazzling light. "I have never been amidst more beautiful scenery, and seldom in a sweeter family. . . . They are happy and good, and they are banded by the silken cord which is never felt, yet never loosed; one spirit of affection pervades

the whole." He has a pleasant room at Mr. Huidekoper's, who had seen improvements of every kind grow up, a spirit of brotherhood increase, and could look to the future with joyful hope. He was much interested too in biblical criticism, addicted to theological speculation, fond of discussions, a great talker, well informed, an acute observer, a man of some originality, exceedingly kind in all his feelings, keen of insight, judicious, practical, industrious, instructive, and entertaining; about fifty-two years old when Mr. Channing saw him. Love of freedom, enterprise, conscious energy made him more than willing to leave his old home.

Meadville was a quiet village, and society there not very various or enlivening. Mr. John S. Dwight, who was tutor to the youngest son, sang or played on the flute in the evenings.

Let me introduce you [he wrote to his mother] to two of my friends here quite worth knowing. A man of about five feet six inches, dressed wholly in woolen on a hot day, with a broad-brimmed beaver, stops me. "Muster Shan-neeng weel you com and tak tea wid me dis evening, over at Smelzer's?" "With great pleasure." "Muster Rüter will be dere." "At what hour?" "Oh, say between four and five." At about five I go over to Smelzer's, the miller, just across the creek. Mrs. S. meets me at the door. She is about five feet eleven; thin, gaunt, about forty-five; wears a cap, from under which some frosted locks peep. But she is German, and a franker, kinder manner no one would wish to see. It is open hand, and "Oh, Mr. Channing, I am glad to see you. Let me take your hat. My daughter," and a black-eyed, pretty lassie, with a manner which says, "I'm neither ashamed of myself nor my station, and I don't believe you are," curtsies and sets a chair. "Smel-

zer is over yon at the mill. I'm a-tellin him that he'll just die if he keeps on so dreadful hard at work. Now the stream's full, its all night and all day; he does not get any sleep at all." "Is Mr. Beyers at home?" "Yes, I'll call him." In walks my German friend. He is by birth a Bavarian, and took it into his rebellious head to study at some other university than his liege lord thought orthodox. Before he could return to his province it was necessary he should make an apology and ask forgiveness. This his proud republicanism would not stoop to, and he is an exile. He landed here almost penniless and without a friend. At home he had studied divinity and preached nine months. He intended to preach here. But he knew not a word of English. He found a station amongst the Germans, passed from place to place, finally came here, where he has found a warm friend in Mr. Huidekoper. The Germans of this State are boorish and ignorant to the extreme, absorbed in money-making, prejudiced, and the society here is paradise to the poor man. He has become much attached to Dwight, and cannot bear the thought of his leaving. He has a fine mind, considerably cultivated, and most delightful simplicity. With these he unites great warmth of feeling and indomitable spirit. Miserable as his situation is, he does not yield to depression. He has now acquired a considerable command of the English. I wish much we could get him some situation at the East. I suppose, however, there are hundreds who have been driven from their homes in Europe by tyranny, similarly situated among us. Soon Ruter is seen walking down the hill, with hat off, and swinging a cane in his hand. He is a young man of about twenty-three, pale, with a dark eye, liquid and fiery. There is an air of eccentricity, conceit, or bashfulness about him. The ladies think him handsome. You should hear him talk once. Such a flood of questions; and before you can answer one he begins to theorize and speculate. He will start doubts in five minutes for you to answer which require

as many hours. You produce your arguments. "Yes, but this is the sort of thing that makes the difficulty;" and then comes a string of odd ideas. Shelley is his prophet, and Goethe he thinks a divinity. Life he considers a mystery, a hair bridge over nothingness; darkness everywhere, and here and there a solitary gleam. Everything is imperfect, worthless. It is only in the ideal, in the yearning after perfection, the longing after the unattainable, one would expect happiness here. There is no heartiness, no simplicity, no enthusiasm; but all is mechanical, and proper, and worldly. You see a young sentimentalist, but he is one of a very high order.

He works hard, prepares sermons, writes miscellaneous articles for the "Western Messenger," the organ of Unitarianism in the West. The first number was issued in June, 1835, at Cincinnati, Ephraim Peabody being editor. In February, 1836, in consequence of his illness, it was transferred to Louisville, where James Freeman Clarke edited and published it till June, 1839, when it was removed back to Cincinnati, and was under the charge of Mr. Channing, who edited it till March, 1841. Then it died. It was a bright paper, a monthly, conducted with eminent ability and with a brilliant company of writers. James H. Perkins had a hand in its management. C. P. Cranch, Samuel Osgood, Tracy Howe, and many Western men lent their aid. Margaret Fuller contributed several articles. Emerson sent four of his poems, the first he ever published. Dr. Channing gave his essay on Catholicism. Mr. Channing had it much on his mind, projected a series of religious tales for it, studies on the different denominations, pieces on the saints of all churches, papers on spiritual ideas; "Grains of Truth in Ancient Faiths;" the "Spirit of the Creeds," Cath-

olic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Quaker; "Visions of the Future," in which he declares that "only the strong can endure." He had strong faith that a simple gospel consisting of a few points, (1) a God of love; (2) man his child; (3) Christ an elder brother, the perfection of humanity; (4) heaven a place of moral unfolding, our real home; (5) character as the end and aim of divine providence, would spread over the continent. "Progress, progress, progress in every faculty and power," was the goal of his striving. He began a series of lectures on the epistles of Paul, aiming to detach the essential and eternal teaching from the local and incidental accompaniment, thus setting the whole writing in a new light, and giving a fresh interpretation to the argument; somewhat as Orville Dewey did, and as Matthew Arnold attempted later. He feels that he is doing some good. "I *preached* yesterday," he writes to a friend. He is more than content. He is perfectly at home; he likes the West, talks about Detroit and other cities. But his plans are uncertain.

And the people all liked him, wished he would stay. One morning when he came in from a walk, a little girl stood in the doorway, with a bunch of flowers in her hand. They were coarse and common, but they were gathered for him. She dropped a curtsy in reply to his salutation, put back her calash from her brown face, and said, "Mother is glad you are better," — he had been a little unwell, — "and sends you these flowers." "Old Mrs. Guin said to me the other night, 'I suppose you can get a larger parish away East, but we are so satisfied, I wish you would stay. Our folks all think so.'" This was genuine praise, and he felt it to be. His heart was full. The beauty

of the scenery grew upon him. He saw omens of joy in the clouds, in the sunlight on the hills. The freedom enchanted him. But he could not remain. At least, he felt that he could not. His time was up, and he went away.

In the early autumn, having been three months in Meadville, he returns to Cambridge, still irresolute, still afflicted with his old disease of disproportionate speculation. He cannot fire himself up. His brain is a-light, but not his will. He talks of travel; proposes Europe in the spring, to his mother; spends the winter months in study and miscellaneous reading; would go to a foreign university if time permitted. That he can theorize as bravely as ever appears from the following extracts from letters:—

I am conscious that my chief power is reflective and suggestive. It is my tendency of mind. I am able occasionally to help the birth of a friend's thought. Occasionally there is a sudden germinating of ideas in my own mind, as if a volcanic fire was spreading its warmth under a cold soil. They shoot up profusely, and twinkle in the sun a little, and show the bloom of the flower in the bud; but alas, they wither without going to seed, and the soil exhausts itself without re-sowing. If you have transplanted a few, you owe them more to God and nature than to me. . . . Let each man be himself, listen to that voice which speaks to all who listen, — "Fulfill thou the work given to *thee* to do." One is a general, another a corporal, a third a drummer, a fourth a fighter; some, one might almost say, are only muskets; but even in this last case it depends upon themselves to be an old rusty firelock that one can hardly pull and then flashes in the pan, or a Perkins steam-gun that fires its sixty balls a minute. It is the great truth which all of us are learning somehow or other; sooner or later (in fact, we all of us knew it at starting, only we did n't believe) man must

save (*i. e.* perfect and keep from degenerating) his own soul. Nobody on earth or in heaven can do it for him. And how? There is but one way. Follow implicitly, steadily, and with alacrity, hope, patience, the finger on the sign-post. We call it reflection, judgment, conscience, common sense, reason, according to our habit of observation and personal experience; but let us call it what we will, we are all conscious of that divine self within self which sees without spectacles, while it is yet far off (as a bee does its waxen home in the sweet meadow), the path which leadeth unto peace through pleasantness. . . . It seems sometimes as if there were a narrow, high-walled, dusky passage before one, which looks damp and cheerless, and the floor is rough and flinty, and nobody seems to be going that way, and it does not look as if anybody had been through, and you are all alone. "Enter, my son." You hear without hearing the invitation. I wonder if there is not a pleasanter way. You run all round through the sunny flower plots, amid the music of birds, and sweet perfumes around you, with companions as willful or thoughtless as yourself; there is no other entrance. It is getting late, and you are tired; many have left you, the flowers are fading and birds taking wing, and you come back to the same entrance, now darker, narrower, than before. "My son, you may enter," is now the merciful privilege. This is an old tale, but how true! I have followed imagination, self-love, prudence, the crowd; I trust some day to know that blessed disinterestedness of following duty. In a letter from my uncle last summer, he said, "Fix a high ideal of a Christian minister, and spare no labor to realize it in your own person." One thing only, let this ideal be distinct. Let us not, in looking to see how tall he carries a heaven-gazing countenance, forget that he ought to wear shoes.

He then goes on to give, from his arm-chair, the very best advice to his working correspondent, counseling him to *muse* about himself as little as possible,

and to have *enterprise* in his plans for acquiring spiritual wealth.

Again, still gazing on his fire from his easy-chair :

A great many subjects have occurred to me on which I thought I could descant with pleasure in a letter, but some have gone into my note-books, to be filled up into sermons, if ever, in spite of my unfaithfulness to duty, Providence shall fit me for a minister and appoint me a sphere ; and others have passed away from present consciousness, to be recalled in that last day when, in long procession, shall sweep before us neglected opportunities in the form and garb of heaven-commissioned angels whom we have slighted. Oh, how pitifully sad, how mildly upbraiding, will be their aspect as they hold before us the picture of what we might have been and done had we accepted their guidance ! Two or three may come up to recollection. One is fresh in my mind which struck me much, though I have never thought it out. It is an answer to the common objection against miracles from the permanence of the universal law of cause and effect, and it is so obvious I wonder it never occurred to me before. The regular sequence of cause and effect is apparently broken daily, hourly, momentarily, by every act of every free intelligence.

Then, in an eloquent statement, he anticipates Horace Bushnell's argument for the supernatural quality of the human will, the divine sanctity of personality, the miraculous supremacy of volition in the world of causation.

Another subject which has occupied a good deal of my thoughts is one upon which we all think sometimes, and come to the same conclusion. " Why hast Thou made me thus ? Thou who art love, unchanging, all embracing, fervent, omnipotent."

This hard question he answers, still sitting in his

easy-chair, by saying that thus only could men become immortal souls, that God is resolved to make all mankind happy through the unfolding of character.

Immediately connected with this is that awful question, Can a soul die? . . . Christianity does say that souls can perish, I think. . . . I feel more and more the absurdity, to say the least, of our being left here by an indifferent Creator.

So he inclines to believe that none will perish eternally, if they can, by any means, divine or human, be developed.

And so on, and so on. A surprisingly active intellect is busy with the toughest speculative problems, with theories of usefulness, with visions of service. Floods of eloquent speech spread themselves over sheets of paper. Dreams of good burn and crackle in the air. But the easy-chair is still drawn up to the fire in his mother's house at Cambridge. He preaches now and then, reads a good deal, — Goethe, Carlyle, Dunlop; he writes letters to his classmates about the ministry; but his energy is not at all in proportion to his power of thinking. The remarkable thing is that the thinking comes so close to energy of will. It turns on such practical themes, touches the heart so nearly, approaches so directly the sources of action, that it is not easy to understand the moral inertness. But the Man was not yet stirred. His hour had not yet come. He had found the ideas, but not the purpose.

V.

EUROPE.

HE evidently wanted to go abroad. He was fond of travel. He believed in it for himself. He loved change of place, variety of people, new society, fresh scenes. He thought, too, that his mind would be expanded, his will quickened, his emotions fed. He was dissatisfied with himself, perhaps a little tired, at all events not altogether pleased with his professional position. He was interested in literary matters; spoke of a projected review devoted to a spiritual philosophy, and mainly dependent on translations, to be conducted by Hedge, Emerson, and leaders in that school of thought. This must have been the "Dial," which was then talked of among the elect spirits. He sailed on the 23d of April, 1835, with his mother and sister. Just before leaving home he engaged himself to Miss Allen, a younger sister of the first Mrs. Jared Sparks, a bright-minded and accomplished lady. Her father, then living at Rondout, on the Hudson, was nephew of William Hamilton, governor of Pennsylvania, and, though a Tory, a friend of Washington. Mr. Allen was an ardent Episcopalian, as were all his family, and the daughters were desired not to change their faith, whomever they married. This resolve, as it befell, was no serious drawback on their husbands' happiness or success. For Mr. Channing, besides being opposed to sectarianism, was essentially roman-

tic in his nature, disposed to look at religion on its poetical side, easily fascinated by architecture and beauty, and inclined to regard with something more than interest the æsthetical aspects of the Christian faith. He took a lively interest in the confirmation of his eldest daughter, as later in that of his youngest, and soon after his marriage enjoyed a Roman Catholic service, in New York. In fact, there was some question of having one of his eldest children baptized by a Catholic priest; but that was impossible, as the child was to be brought up a Protestant. It may be, too, that his ardent, glowing temperament, essentially ideal, optimistic, revolutionary, needed the quiet conservative balance of a nature less impetuous and speculative than his own, to make his home entirely peaceful and restful. He himself, in a letter to a classmate announcing his engagement, spoke of it as a happy thing, tethering him to this side of the water, and making it a charming duty to turn his thoughts homeward while traveling abroad. The marriage was happy. The difference in religious opinion, instead of being a bar of separation, was an occasion of charity, generosity, and patience. As years went on, the tender fire of his love brightened so that his domestic life was one of tranquil happiness, becoming ever deeper and more joyous at the end.

He was led to Europe by various considerations, as has been said. A sensitive temperament, yearning after an unattainable end, drove him away from a land of hard fact. He probably expected a good deal from a foreign trip, — an answer to his life question, a solution of his doubts, an opportunity for observation, a decision of his destiny, a revival of his moral energies. In a letter to his friend James Freeman Clarke,

written six weeks before sailing, he says, "I scrape my own catgut in the style most familiar. But when I get to Europe I will give you a real Paganini. You shall be dazzled by the too much of melody; and then I will wind up in that one sound, blending all others, soft, yet of volume to fill the universe, called Peace." On the 6th of September, the same year, his uncle, Dr. Channing, wrote to him at Havre in the following terms:—

I should like to look into your mind, and see what is going on there. Are you calmer and firmer? Are the great principles on which virtue and happiness rest disengaged more and more from the objections and difficulties which have sometimes troubled you? Can you look life in the face more confidently and cheerfully? Does the great end of life rise before you more distinctly and solemnly, and does this simplicity of view and purpose give you a new serenity? Is traveling making you a more efficient man, fitting you for exigencies, hardening you for conflicts? Is difficulty becoming a stimulus, and apparent failure an impulse to new effort? Does your new connection take you more from yourself or diminish your selfish sensitiveness? Are you settling down into a steadier resolution, a more robust character? I put these questions to you, not that you should answer them to me, but to yourself.

Dr. Channing was naturally interested in the Conference or Jubilee that was celebrated in Geneva in August, 1835, and wished that his nephew might attend it. And he did, faithfully, but without any resulting enthusiasm. There were distinguished divines from Switzerland, France, Germany, England. There were sermons, conversations, speeches, statements, efforts at conciliation, but all was fruitless. He was not interested, still less was he fired with spiritual fer-

vor or zeal. He felt the spirit of sectarian jealousy and dogmatic intolerance; his love of unity was offended. The lack of inspiration was manifest. His letter about it, printed in the "Christian Register" of October 17th, was cold and stiff, confining itself to externals, as if there was no living flame to catch.

It is not surprising that in Florence, where he was in November, his taste for art should have been kindled by the famous pictures that he saw, and by the atmosphere of beauty which pervaded the elegant little city. Venice, too, was full of poetic associations, as well as of lovely canvases, in marble church and palace. In Milan, no one so sensitive as he was to form and color could have remained indifferent, while, at that time, Genoa fairly blazed with masterpieces of painting. Steamers had not then blackened the enchanting bay, or trade converted its halls into offices, tarnished its splendor, replaced its nobles by civilians, trodden down its highways, and driven its grandees into exile. The very architecture of cathedrals and ecclesiastical edifices was saturated with secular feeling, and, while consecrated to holiness, remembered its beauty. Channing may well have been fascinated. This awakening of an æsthetic impulse will probably explain the tone of his uncle's letter to him, dated November 26th:—

We have had some interesting movements, of a religious character, lately; I mean interesting as showing what might be done by the right instruments. . . . Undoubtedly men of zeal and a fervent charity might do much to plant churches throughout the whole country. The people are prepared, the harvest is great, but there are next to no laborers. Can you not cherish a sacred fire as well as cultivate taste? You might do much, could you throw off your

painful self-consciousness, and bring out your heart freely. I should rejoice to have you for my neighbor in R. I., but the good people there, like the rest of the world, want eloquence, ability, zeal, and I know not what. Whether you will return the perfect minister, I am not sure.

The letter was sent by Mr. John Parkman, a candidate for the ministry, and occasion is taken to exhort William to make a good use of his companion, "as well as see sights together."

The winter was spent in Rome, then an ecclesiastical city. There dirt and deity were mingled in picturesque confusion. The court was the most gorgeous in Europe. Cardinals drove about the streets. The working priests were active in all parts of the town. The church services were superb. Nothing that might captivate the senses or touch the emotions was omitted. The spectacle was brilliant and incessant. The people were believing and devout. There was no rivalry, opposition, criticism, or heresy. There one could study Catholicism in peace, surrounded with the glories of ancient art, and associated with tenderest memories of the past. There Mr. Channing undertook to examine the system. No wonder the visitor saw its more favorable side; no wonder he felt its charm. Its authority, its power, its apparent universality, its seeming unity, the thoroughness of its organization, the completeness of its charity, the order and stateliness of its ritual, the grandeur of its accoutrement, were calculated to impress an imagination like his; and had Romanism been as broad intellectually as it was grand sentimentally, his allegiance might have been secured. As it was, his passion for mental freedom kept him faithful to the new spirit. He attended services constantly and devoutly; he talked with

priests. At that time Rev. Henry Edward — afterwards Cardinal — Manning was in Rome, and made Channing's acquaintance. Mr. — afterwards Cardinal — McCloskey remarked the young man's attitude of piety at church. He was much in the company of Romanists. But all was in vain. For a moment it looked as if Protestantism would be renounced. Friends at home were for a moment uneasy. Dr. Channing wrote: —

Your remarks about the Catholic Church did not surprise me. So large a church must include much virtue. How sad it would be to feel that Christianity was doing nothing among so many millions! . . . The Christian world has for ages bowed before the Baal of an outward, ceremonial, arbitrary religion. The age of spirituality is to come. How far it may be the purpose of Providence to bring out and illustrate the truth by the miseries following its obscuration and corruption, I will not say. But all things will work to good. This faith we need now, for truth seems to have a slight hold on a vast majority. I hope you will come prepared to fight its battle. It always needs the spirit of martyrs in its friends, and never more than now.

The words fell on good ground. The language and example of the uncle lent strength to the nephew's confidence in liberty of soul. He did not long waver. In fact, he became a more earnest believer in reason than ever. The Church of Rome suggested a wider communion, a spiritual brotherhood, a faith truly universal, really catholic because spiritual, a deeper because human love, an authority of truth, not of dogma. The closing words of Ernest in the first number of the "Dial," — "So, father, we must give up our free thought. You may be right. But I am not yet ready," — express his final conviction. Of course the alterna-

tive for him, with his Unitarian training, was plain : an independent religious faith, undogmatic, unsectarian, founded upon human nature, and embracing all Christendom. The love of art, of music, of architecture, continued, and was woven into the conception of a church. He could not see why religion should be ugly in proportion as it is spiritual, why it should be formless and bodiless. He had not thought this out. Far from it; years must elapse before the full idea could break upon his mind. But the germ of it was planted in Rome. This was the actual legacy of the Eternal City, — not Romanism, but the reverse. Long afterwards he laughed at the notion that Christianity culminated in Roman Catholicism. That seemed to him the extreme of foolishness, the wildest of fancies. The beginning was not the end. How Romanism struck him in its outward manifestations appears from a letter to James Freeman Clarke : —

ROME, *December 20, 1835.*

DEAR JAMES, — It was with no little joy I received the other day a letter directed in your hand. It found me sick in body from the dampness of the streets, and sick in heart from the moral filth of this great Babylon, which has been for ages the common sewer of the civilized world. To-day is Sunday : shall I tell you what I have been doing, and what thoughts have been in and out and to and fro in the empty chambers? I walked early to St. Peter's. Here at the huge door of some barn of a palace stood the red glaring gilt carriage and tawdrily caparisoned horses of a cardinal ; and there, just opposite, a poor, working woman was buying a bajocco's worth of brains, guts, or fish from the frying-pan of the cook's movable market ; and just at her side, a dirty little brat of a boy had loosened the rags of his yet worn summer habit, to ease himself upon the pave-

ment. Pardon me, but this is Rome, pomp, poverty, and nastiness for neighbors. What people I saw all along the streets! — women whose form and features spoke of native passion and licentious habits; men whom idleness and want and hopeless degradation had paralyzed in the fullness of fine physical and mental powers, standing, dragging about, bargaining, scolding, love-making, joking, on the wet, dirty, foul-smelling streets. I came out from the midst of this upon the piazza, on either hand, the circular colonnade with fourfold rows of columns, — the cornice crowned with statues, — sweeping round the beautiful obelisk towering in the midst, and the fountains veiled in glittering silver showers. Before me the showy though ill-conceived front of the church, and just seen above in the blaze of sunlight the swelling dome. As I stood, awed and delighted, a poor fellow-creature, holding by the hand his child, bared his head to me, begging a quattrino for charity. I gave it to him, and he passed on. He met a priest in purple robes hastening to mass. The servant of God will surely have mercy. Oh no; the son of Levi bows his head, touches his hat, waves his hand, and sweeps on with rustling garments. He can give a thousand years of indulgence, but silver or gold has he none. He cares for souls, not bodies. I stood next at the foot of the Scala Regia, the entrance to the Vatican. One by one, in long file, the cardinals' carriages came lumbering up, the servants in silver lace and cocked hats hanging on behind. Here was one new and glittering, the liveries bright. The owner was rich, or lately raised to office. Next followed a faded, rickety old box, the horses starved, and the worn coats hanging loosely round the veteran servants. Their master was poor in purse, or grown gray in harness. The doors are opened; from the servants' carriages behind outspring in bustling haste train-bearers; his Eminence in helplessness is taken from his carriage and got upstairs, and so on. I followed on to the Sistine Chapel. But why should I weary and disgust you with a detailed

description of all the mummary, worse than childish, of this Grand Lama worship. The twisting and untwisting of the cardinals' robes or tails, the folding up and unfolding of the great baby petticoats, the kissing of fingers and toes, the transmission of the holy kiss all round the circle, the bowing this way and then that, the putting on and off the crimson skull cap, — strange, strange it was to see old venerable men thus playing antics, for no conceivable purpose, and full as strange to see the crowd of spectators. On one side of me was an old priest, his white beard sweeping his breast, the thin hairs silvering his palsied head ; on the other a young, keen-eyed canon, and both as much interested as a child is with Punch and Judy. Each single person knew perfectly that this was a farce, and yet all felt reverence ; each saw the wires and helped to pull them, yet bowed in and before the puppets. Most marvelous is this power of social sympathy. And these were the Apostles of Christendom. Is it possible, one asks himself, that one spark of natural religion can yet live under this rubbish of artificial parade ? What things we are ! If an atheist had deliberately devoted his life to conceiving and executing a plan for completely preventing every intended influence of the religion of Jesus, the Catholic forms would have been the most effectual which ingenuity could employ. Do you suppose that one of these masqueraders had any doubt as to the rectitude and expediency of his conduct, or the Christianity or unchristianity of it ? Do you suppose he ever asks himself anything about it ? “ The theory of an eternal yesterday,” which habit, childish reverence, good associations, self-interest, laziness, fear, sanctified, was this service. Old men pleased with baubles ! Why, even such a mind as Bonaparte's, in fierce penetration, cutting through all coverings to the very core of things, loved to be wrapped about in the emperor's velvet and ermine. How Sartor Resartus would sorrowfully smile in his tolerant, because deep-looking, philosophy over this old dowager trumpery !

How our souls do fumble about, the fingers cased so that they cannot touch, and the feet bandaged so that they can but tottle, knocking our heads together in a blind-man's-buff of deaf-and-dumb, tumbling and sprawling in one grand row of hide-and-seek! But come with me into St. Peter's. Bow in gratitude and wonder for what man's taste and art can accomplish. Look down the long perspective, where the light breaks across the misty air, the splendor of the golden roof above, the rich glancing marbles below and around, the mosaic pictures in the side chapels, the gorgeously ornamented and graceful vault above, the giant statues in the niches all round, the sculptured tombs of buried popes, seen here and there through opening vistas in the aisles, the ever-burning golden lamps of the confessional, splendor, beauty, grandeur, vastness, gloom, and brightness, exquisite finish and mighty proportions, solemnity and gladness, forming an atmosphere about you, and the divinest music ear ever heard swelling and dying away. This after the Sistine Chapel is indeed refreshing. Why, look there. Do you see that woman lifting her blubbering boy to kiss the polished toe of that ugly stiff old bronze statue? — and there is a countryman plump down on his knees before it. Old tottering men and gayly dressed girls, the pallid beggar, the rosy, gilded son of wealth, priest and layman, rub their foreheads and touch their lips to that ill-shaped, half-worn-off old foot, which, if tradition speaks truth, once belonged to Jupiter. My dear friend, why not worship sharks with the South Sea Islander? Is man naturally idiotic, and reason a disease? But look again. Do you see that confessional box? You observe the jolly old priest in it holds in his hand a long fishing pole, with which he seems bobbing for gudgeon. A man kneels down, and he taps him with that wonderful though very ordinary-looking cane rod on the shoulder. Do you know what that touch did? It gave the poor devil assurance of some century of pardon from purgatory, so you see he can go

directly and sin easily in any and every way for a week or two. Man need not keep his conscience. Much safer to put it into the savings-bank of Rome, where they pay interest in paper money. No matter if the principal is squandered and is no more to be found, no matter whether the specie in the vault equals the sum in bills. The note is good for the present. I never would have believed that I could have looked at anything without toleration, but this passes my philosophy. Yet how much may we learn from it! You will see from all this that I am sick of Rome. Ancient Rome I never loved. Spite of the political talent and virtue of some of her sons, she was one of the worst states of antiquity, both in herself and in her influence. She was the great slave mart and butchery house. She crushed liberty while she diffused the vices of civilization. And modern Rome, what else has she ever been but a lamp of darkness, shedding error and perplexity on every little Goshen? But there is no good in holding our heads in a sink of pollution merely to analyze the particulars of unwholesome odors. For the student of art, the attractions are great. I wish I could take you with me to the scores of studios of thriving young artists, sculptors almost to a man, for painting is good in our day only for the accurate anatomical drawing. Color and design are lost arts. But let this go, too.

I cannot send you a letter without some words of private friendship. Most sincerely do I echo your wish that somehow and somewhere we may be fellow-workers. At all events, my dear James, we must never intermit our correspondence. If our barks do not ride on the same wave, we will hail each other, with news of what we see in heaven or on the main, for guides and beacons, as we are tossed and sink on life's billows. How much you have got the start of me! Well, dear friend, be assured my envy is generous. I bid you from my heart God speed, though I am becalmed just now, and prosperous breezes swell your

trim canvas. And Eliot, too, noble young enthusiast, — how I honor him! Do not think I blame myself too much for the difference between my lot and that of so many who started with me. I understand, I believe, the peculiarities, both good and evil, of my nature. I only trust in God's mercy that I shall not die without ripening and bearing some fruit. But sufficient for the day is the evil and the good thereof. I thank you for your kind sympathy with the good which I enjoy so far above all merit. It will give me no little pleasure to make you personally acquainted with one who to the very heart's core is a woman. The knowledge of character, you will remember, is one point on which I always thought myself your superior, because my fancy is cooler than that self-blinding lady of yours. But though I have never acted out my feeling as you have always done, I have been fancy captive many a time and oft. I wish you were married to one suited to you. Ask first, Is she true? next, Are her affections pure, has she good sense, and will she grow? But you ought, my dear James, to marry your superior, if you can find her. An inferior girl would not be your improving companion. But why do I talk this nonsense? You do not need for the health of your mind such a connection as I do. Only I cannot but wish you to enjoy this purest of earth's blessings. I am not afraid of your laughing at that.

But I must close this very unsatisfactory letter. Poor Peabody I pity from my soul, bravely as he bears up. Depend upon it I shall see Carlyle if possible. I shall not visit Hamburg or be again in Germany, in any probability, but there is a bookstore in Paris where German works are sold on reasonable terms. I shall buy there some books for myself, and as you leave it to my judgment, I will do the same for you, if I think you will be the gainer. You give no directions as to the disposition of them, so I shall send them with my own to New York. I shall be at home in August.

Yours, W. H. C.

Of the external incidents of the journey it is unnecessary to speak at length, — of the cities he visited, the fine things he saw, the men and women he met. He traveled through Germany, France, England, Scotland. He trod the streets of Bologna, Naples. He looked on the Italian lakes. He dreamed beside the Arno and the Tiber. The party consisted of his mother and sister, Miss Gibbs, and her nephew, a young student of law. They took warm letters of introduction to Dr. Channing's friends in Great Britain, and, on the whole, profited by their trip, William probably most of all; for though he spoke slightly of travel as "an idle business," and of spending a winter in Italy as "of all follies the one I am least likely to commit again," and of Rome as "a miserable place for a residence," from the "all-pervading wretchedness that overshadows all," he derived more moral benefit than he was aware of. His longing for active work was quickened; his purpose was freshly animated; his ideal was rendered clearer; his zeal to elevate mankind was intensified. He said little afterwards about his experiences, and some supposed that they had no special significance, but a careful study of his mind discloses in more ways than one the effect on him of this year abroad.

The following brief extracts from his mother's letters give a hint of the delight experienced in England: —

On Wednesday, we went, at eleven o'clock, to Hampstead, to breakfast with Miss Aiken, as I told you we had promised to do. Miss Aiken is very animated and sensible, and neither august nor pedantic, but she has not the gentle dignity of Miss Baillie: they are very unlike, however,

and ought not to be compared ; they are each good of their kind, and are very excellent friends and neighbors. We made a call upon Miss Baillie the same day, and found her sweet and pleasing as before. . . . At six in the evening of Wednesday we went to Chelsea, to drink tea with the Carlyles, and I do not know that I ever made a visit which gave me more pleasure. Mr. C., though a very agreeable and interesting man, is plain, almost to rudeness, in his manners. This is not quite correct, either ; for he has all the politeness that native kindness and benevolence gives, but there is little polish about him, and I should have supposed he had seen very little of society. I therefore inferred, rather hastily, that his wife must be somewhat homely, perhaps rustic, though I was prepared to like her from her note to me. We found her, on the contrary, very ladylike in her looks and manners, and perfectly lovely from the union of great intelligence and perfect simplicity. I have scarcely ever met a more attractive woman. She is very highly cultivated, too, understands a number of languages, and speaks both French and Italian fluently. They have no children, and have both delicate health, but, I should think, were as happy as people can possibly be under these circumstances.

Carlyle has a brother, I should think older than himself, now residing with him, and they form a very interesting trio ; for the brother is a remarkable man, too. He is a physician, and has been several years on the continent, I presume with some family of invalids, from what he said.

They are all extremely affectionate towards each other, and seem to live delightfully, though with a simple hospitality almost equal to Oberlin's. I delight in these honest folks, who are willing you should see them as they really are, and do you the justice to believe that fine conversation is better in your estimation than a grand entertainment.

Mrs. Carlyle gave me a fine sketch of Mrs. Somerville, who is her near neighbor ; Mrs. Austen, who is an intimate

friend; Mrs. Jameson, whom she knows very well about, though she does not visit her; and Leigh Hunt, who has for two years lived close by them. Both she and her husband spoke very highly of Hunt, not only as a man of genius, but as one of the most amiable, kind-hearted beings in existence; yet they utterly disapprove his past political course, and seem quite aware of many defects. Carlyle, in concert with many others, is now laboring to get him a pension from government, of which he stands much in need. We took leave of these good folks with a determination to see them again.

MY DEAR S., — My last letter to you was closed just as we were going to make our farewell visits to our London friends. I have four days to account for. We went first to the Carlyles, and luckily found them at leisure to see us. They are, certainly, the most interesting couple I ever saw, and live in a style of the most charming, primitive simplicity. It was worth crossing the Atlantic to see such people. I could not but think of your uncle Walter all the time we were with them. He would be quite as much struck with Carlyle's conversation as with his writings. I never heard anybody talk who put so much meaning into a few short words. I doubt, exceedingly, whether there is any literary man in Great Britain who would impress me so much. I parted from them as from old friends, with a feeling of great regret that we should meet no more. We received one attention on that day which must not be forgotten, — an invitation from Mrs. Fletcher, formerly of Edinburgh, to pass the Sunday at her house, near Chatham. This was brought by her son, Mr. Angus F. I would most gladly have accepted it, if we had not been on the wing. Mr. Ticknor, as you may remember, gave us a letter to this lady, but we did not deliver it, so she could only have heard of us through the Bootts. Dr. B. speaks of her as one of the finest women in England, and as she moves in high

circles, an invitation of this kind, from her, is the greatest honor we have received.

It is partly to excite the envy of some of our enthusiastic friends, in dating from Wordsworth's vicinity, but chiefly because I have an hour of leisure while William has gone to visit this genius of the lakes, that I begin a letter to you now. . . .

William had the disappointment of learning that Mr. Wordsworth was still in London, and on his way to the Continent, to visit Italy, where he has never been. I wish he had chosen last winter instead. Mrs. Wordsworth received William very pleasantly.

We were engaged to lunch with Miss Joanna Baillie. Mrs. B., who is quite intimate with Miss B., accompanied us. The day was fine, the country lovely, and we were all disposed to enjoy ourselves. The dear old lady would have won us to good humor, if we had been less amiably disposed, for her manners are so simple and cordial that one feels inclined to love her at once. They had invited Miss Aiken, who is a neighbor and friend, to meet us, but, unluckily, she had an engagement in the city. There was no one present but the two sisters and a Miss Elliot. We had a deal of conversation, and found both sisters very agreeable. Miss Agnes, who is older than Joanna, has more the air of having been in the world: but they are both simple and kind-hearted as possible, and it delighted us to see a woman who has been celebrated for thirty years thinking no more of herself than the most common person. She has a sort of gentle dignity. She is over seventy, and dresses very plainly, with her gray locks parted over her brow: her eye is deep-set and uncommonly fine, with a sweet and sometimes arch expression. There is nothing very striking in her conversation but its vivacity and spirit, to which the Scotch accent gives double effect. She asked after our clergyman, whom she has known, as if they were

familiar friends. After Mr. Phillips, also, who is deservedly classed with them. The two, Dewey Tuckerman and Phillips, seem to have produced quite a sensation here, and have cleared away all difficulties for us who come after them ; for everything from Boston is received with favor.

On the 8th of August, 1836, Dr. Channing welcomed the travelers home.

William, naturally, went at once to Rondout to see Miss Allen. In December he was married to her. A letter to his mother, dated December 20th, from New York, describes their return from a brief wedding trip to Boston. A violent storm on the Sound prevented their arrival before Monday morning, instead of Sunday, as he had hoped, and an alarm of fire in the boarding-house made them fear for a moment that they should be exposed to the rage of another element. But the panic was soon over, and seven days later he writes, " You would smile if I said anything of devoted affection and happiness, so I pass it, only adding that I shall be less haunted by blue devils here, in a comfortable little parlor, with a sweet companion, than alone in my attic." In May, 1839, writing to the same faithful and wise friend, he says, " Julia owes to nature thanks for an elasticity and buoyancy of heart and a contentment with a little which goes far to make her happy. A more affectionate or devoted being there could not well be."

His old enemies infest him less. In a letter addressed to his mother, January 6, 1837, he says :—

You wish me happiness. I may be peculiar, but this ultimate good never enters into my calculation. I pray for the opportunity and will to put forth all my powers rightly

for the increase of good, as a child of light; then only can I be happy, and then I cannot but be happy. Self-satisfaction, or rather an easy conscience, I never yet enjoyed, and never deserved to, though perhaps I have by nature a self-tormenting disposition. This spirit is no fury, though, goading a poor wretch through a hopeless wilderness, but rather a calm-faced angel, which, with bright robes, bends sorrowfully from on high, and whispers, "Why wilt thou make thyself unhappy? Come out from thy poor dark prison-hole of selfishness and supineness and sloth, and work in God's sunlight, in the harvest field of virtue and knowledge."

This torturing aspiration never left him through life, but it was mellowed, softened, and rendered less poisonous by domestic love. His wife's love of art, too, and music must have moderated and soothed and turned in another direction his somewhat exorbitant moral sensibility. He had a nervous, quick, inflammable temperament, which needed diversion rather than stimulus. He had fire enough; if anything, too much. What he required was repose, and this his wife brought him. The following letter to Mr. Clarke, dated from Newport, shows that his look was directed forward: —

NEWPORT, *August 19, 1836.*

MY DEAR JAMES, — I would I could see you too among the friends who welcome me. I would sit down not to talk to you about Europe, but to make you talk to me of spiritual things. How joyfully would I exchange a year's experience with you! Not that I have been disappointed. I knew beforehand all that I should do, see, and learn. I knew exactly for what purpose I went. But I assure you one hour's deep interest in advancing God's great work in my own or others' hearts would outweigh all pleasure I

have met. My mind is more settled, my feelings more simple, and my purpose, God willing, more fixed. All good for *myself* which I hoped there has been gained. But the manner in which I have visited Europe was (strange as it may seem) the last I should have adopted for my own improvement. My own good was not my object, however I am home once more, thanks to a kind guardian, and I trust just entering upon a better era than the past. I have nothing to hinder but myself that is seen; and if I am but faithful, I leave all cheerfully to the All Good. But more of this quite unimportant self than I intended. I am at this moment even more than usually interested about you. I have just been looking over an article, in the shape of a letter to you, from my uncle for the "Western Messenger." It is too long, I fear, to be inserted whole. If you find it so I think you can divide it, that is if you think it suitable for your purpose. One topic, Catholicism, seems to be discussed in a most admirable manner. The first pages and the closing one of the article are filled with the remarks on the present needs of the Christian world, the dangers, trials, and duties of a minister in our time, and *must* be published sooner or later in some way. To my heart they are light and life. I should think them calculated to do good, put forth anywhere. My uncle's mind is full of this subject, I see by many signs. He feels the inefficiency of the Christian ministry. He longs to see — I will not say a spirit of *martyrdom*, though this is needed, but a spirit of *self-devotion*, which in its earnestness will invent or discover new modes of awakening spiritual life in individuals and masses. And he feels the great want of moral independence which has been so generally exhibited lately in proportion with the feeble influence of Christianity in our community. But I am doing injustice to this subject. You know from your own convictions what I mean. What I thirst for in myself is a spirit which shall seek to learn, "What did Jesus intend to teach and effect?" and entire discipleship in

obedience and imitation. I have looked over the number's of your paper with great interest. As to its fitness to answer your purpose, I cannot, of course, judge; but it seems to me it must be useful. If I can be of the least service to you, give me some hints how I can aid you. It will be a great pleasure to do so. Write me as often as you have time and inclination. I long to be an intimate friend, and more. Do not think me hopelessly insensible to duty because I do not come at once to the West. My plans are wholly unformed. If I felt, however, that I really had power, I should stay here. If we do not need reform here, nowhere is it needed. Unitarianism has feeble supporters, it seems to me, here, and one after another they will be taken away. My first experiments will be here, and I never shall go to the West, I think, now, unless once and for all — and yet the excitement of a missionary life would please me.

Yours, sincerely,

W. H. C.

VI.

MINISTRY AT LARGE IN NEW YORK.

MR. CHANNING was from the first interested in the organization of charity, the application of religion to the condition of the poor ; so that his later work was but an extension of his earlier. At Rome he studied the beneficent operations of the Catholic Church. In Paris he gave much attention to the working of the Baron de Gerando's plans. On his return he had long conversations with Joseph Tuckerman, of Boston, the philanthropist, who suggested his undertaking the ministry among the poor in New York, then projected under the auspices of Unitarians. These were the confident days of the sect, when it expected a grand spread of its gospel, and believed that the delivery of its message would be eagerly welcomed by listening ears, especially among the simple and unlettered. The labor that was going on in Boston, it was fancied, might be carried forward with far more eminent success in a larger city. The two societies in New York were full of zeal, rich and generous. Mr. Dewey had been installed as minister of the Second Society a little more than a year, and was drawing crowds by his eloquent preaching. The harvest seemed ripe, and it was anticipated that from kindling, persuasive lips the new views respecting God, Christ, man, would command instant acceptance. Dr. Channing, with all his caution, was con-

vinced that the people would respond to the glad tidings of the soul's capacity and destiny, and advised his nephew to make the attempt. He had no engagement. He was interested in practical work. He was persuaded that Unitarianism should present its humane side to the public. The project had a noble look. Then, taken as a means of personal discipline, the service appeared to be spiritually beneficial. On the 27th of December, 1836, he was at work, but the prospect was less brilliant than had been anticipated. The following letter to his mother tells the story of his labor : —

NEW YORK, *February 4, 1837.*

MY DEAREST MOTHER, — I trust you have not been anxious because I have been silent for a longer interval than before. I have been waiting for something to communicate. Our committee were to have had a meeting last Sunday, upon the result of which I thought my ulterior plans would somewhat depend. The meeting, however, was deferred till last evening (Friday). I will open to you the whole state of the case. On coming here I could find no one who had any information to communicate as to the moral wants of the city, or any advice as to where and how I was to go to work. Mr. Arnold, indeed, should be expected. He aided me as far as possible. But I felt that I was thrown in here alone, to form my own plans and proceed in my own way. I first took a district, — a large one, — and went through it street by street and house by house, to learn the character and condition of the population. My surprise was great to find how generally, how all but universally, children were gathered into Sunday-schools. My first inquiries were directed to this point, for my plan was to take children under my charge, thus get introduction to families, then bring the parents out to a chapel. I found that instead of hordes of children going to destruction, Sun-

day-schools were open in every direction, there being no less than twenty-six in my region, the teachers of which rivaled each other in visiting every family and taking the children with them Sunday by Sunday to school. Instead of a harvest to reap, therefore, I was to glean only in a field already faithfully harvested. Every family I entered, with but few exceptions, was already visited. Again, I found the city was under the care, from one end to the other, of a board of visitors called "Tract Distributers," whose object was to teach the gospel to the poor. Here were a sort of ministers at large, occupying as good husbandmen this desolate wilderness, as I had been led to expect to find it. I have been gradually coming more and more to appreciate this truly sublime effort. Let me give you some idea of the extent of it. The city is divided into portions, each ward being one, over which there is a superintendent, who is one of the most influential men in the ward for piety and talent. Under him there is an agent, who receives a salary, and devotes his whole time to the work of directing religious effort in his ward. The wards are divided into districts, in each of which there is a visitor, whose duty it is to visit all the families under his charge at least once a month, and oftener if possible, bring them to prayer-meetings which are held in the district, direct them to churches, reform them, see that their children are in Sunday-schools and day-schools, and help them in the way of charity. These visitors have monthly meetings to report progress and give and receive advice. The agents meet weekly to animate each other in the work. There are now sixteen agents to twelve hundred visitors. The expenses of the work are one thousand dollars a month. They intend this year to increase the number of visitors to two thousand, and their plan, when completed, contemplates establishing a mission church in each ward. Here is the plan. What think you? I challenge Christendom for the last eighteen hundred years to show such a sublime plan of Christian

philanthropy. It is sublime, and is not in theory, remember, but for the most part in effective operation. To complete the picture, let me tell you that every denomination in this city (except the Unitarians, who are excluded) go hand in hand in this grand mission. In addition there are six Presbyterian free churches, four Episcopal, two Baptists, twenty Methodist churches, which are always free, and four Roman Catholic. What were a little handful of strangers, as the Unitarians are here, to do with this ministry at large? I will tell you what I saw they must do, and the only thing they could do. Take hold *man by man* in a good work with just the same zeal as our brother Christians; organize themselves into a band of visitors who shall take families under their charge; cast off all sluggishness, and not commission a man to go into the field for them to do their work, but go themselves and do it; and if the other sects cannot conscientiously admit them as fellow-laborers, at least imitate their noble example, and prove that they are living souls, not dead bones. This plan, then, I proposed to the committee: that every family should take under their charge some one or more poor families, to be their spiritual and temporal friends; that such visitors should form a society to gain information and concert measures for relieving poverty, etc. This plan I shall try to see under way, and then I shall resign. This is my present view, and if I can succeed in bringing the Unitarians thus actively into the field of charity, I shall feel that I have done not a little in helping the cause of truth as well as philanthropy in New York. My own minister's experience has been an excellent one. I trust Providence will soon guide me to some other labor. I was glad to hear that you were well.

With grateful respect your devoted son,

W. H. C.

This letter was shown to Dr. Channing, who was surprised to learn that so much was done for the poor by the orthodox churches, but who still saw a

large field among the workingmen for the dissemination of the new faith. He expressed confidence in his nephew, encouraged him to remain, and spoke hopefully of the success of a contemplated free chapel, particularly of William's success in preaching to the children. But the task was hard, disagreeable, and unpromising. The free church was thought of in February, partly to enlist the coöperation of the industrial classes. It was to be a centre of beneficent action, unsectarian in spirit and deed, humane, sympathetic, helpful, hopeful. It was to be plain, simple, obscure, as a matter of course, but it was to be rich in zeal, and adorned with the graces of the Holy Spirit. This letter, written to his mother, will give an idea of the needs of the ministry at the beginning:—

NEW YORK, *January 12, 1837.*

MY DEAREST MOTHER, — You would like to know how life passes in this good city, so why should I not sketch for you some of the scenes of one day? If I had the pen of Scott, I could make you laugh and weep at once. The slight snow which fell the other night has changed to rich mud under the tread of men and pigs, and the frozen gutters discharge various-tinted soap-suds upon the sidewalk. I gather, therefore, my cloak tight about me and splash along through Washington Street. A little below Clinton Market on the left is a three-story brick building bearing proudly on its front in large letters "Clinton House." This grand hotel is a boarding-house for "loafers" (as those who live from hand to mouth are somewhat wittily called), who pay for a lodging in coin or kind, *i. e.* kind words. In the attic lives a wretched family. I mounted the dark and well-worn stairs, and knocking at a door was saluted by a man's gruff voice, "What wanted?" The door opened, and a red-haired, six-foot Caledonian appeared, who was evi-

dently engaged in combing his stiff locks and arranging his dirty, starchless collar in a broken glass in his spacious apartment of six by four. I had mistaken the room, and the shrill cry of a baby mingled with the "Whist, now, Willie, won't ye — there's some one at the door" — guided me. I knocked — no answer; again — all was still; so I fumbled for the latch in the dark entry, and lifting it entered. On the hearth a few half-burned sticks in the cold ashes told me that the damp air had not been warmed, though already noon. The floor was unswept and strewed with various articles. Some broken bread was in a paper on the table. The light, cold and scanty, came from the window in the roof. In the bed was a woman with two children, a baby and a boy of about five, and a glance at the heated features of the mother, half hid as they were in a dirty, ragged handkerchief, showed me that she had found at times momentary relief from her misery in the delirium of drink. As she sat up to receive the intruder, the baby hushed its screams and pressed its little hands against her breast, seeking its nourishment, the naked boy shivering by her side in the narrow cot. "You see, sir, it's wretched enough that I am, the mother of five children, and the father of them an ugly husband, that's left me these twelve months, come April, and it's better it is that he is gone, for had I been a brute he could not have treated me no worser." And where are your five? "Here's the baby, the darling, that's one; and there's the boy, that's two. He is sick, as you see, sir, since he got his New Year's gift, which was a dreadful cold that he took in begging cold meat in the damp streets. The boy is a good boy and my only son, and if he should die I should grow crazy. And there's Sally, that's three. My name is Sarah, too, — Sarah Boyce from Ireland near Carrickfergus. My husband is a Presbyterian, and I a Church of Englander, and yet we were married. Ye are a gentleman and may be a Catholic. So, well, we were married. My father's a nice farmer there,

and owns a sweet little bit of a farm, and I can gather in clover, and thresh corn, and churn butter, and many a time I have seen stacks in his yard, would feed enough of the poor in this place of New York, and a turf bog with ten pounds a year. I am a smart woman when I am well, and can turn my hand to almost anything. I go out washing by the day, when my girl is here to take care of the children. But where am I going — it's my Sal I was talking about. She is a bad girl, though it's the mother of her that says the same. Why, what do you think? Sal, said I, go for the corporation wood, for it was Saturday, and we had not a stick in the house, and they allowed me a half load being that I am a widow as it were. She was gone a long while, and when she came back she said, Mother, says she, Mr. — put down his cross here to say that he would let ye have no wood; and what do you think, sir, that we have been sitting by the fire of the people below, for they flatter her up and give her a bit of meat now and then, and she washes their pots and cleans their room, and leaves her mother alone." "And where are the other two?" "And did I not tell you about them — Oh, the dears — it is in heaven they are I hope this day, and I am here, but wretched as I am I would not suffer, if I could get my girl to make me a fire and clean up my things and stay at home with the children and I go out. It's willing I am to work when I am able, but now I have this ugly pain in my back, and sooner nor my baby shall starve I will beg for it, that I will, and my name that says it is Sarah Boyce, No. 493 Washington St." But leaving this house of misery, I went downstairs to see the landlady. In the grog-shop below, behind a tempting array of decanters, helping a poor creature who hid her face in her bonnet, stood Mrs. Philips, large, bold, and brawny, with a keen black eye. "Is it me that you wish to speak with in private? Walk in, sir," and she led the way into a narrow chamber, formed by a board partition run up through the shop, giving room for a bed, a

table, and chair. "It's small accommodation that I have, and not fit for a gentleman, and you want to know about the woman. Well, to tell a truth and no lie, she's a dacent body when the drink is out of her, and a smart one; but, poor thing, since her husband abused and left her, and her baby died and was not buried, but taken away to make a skeleton, it's not sound that she has been in her mind." I could not but be struck with the pathos so natural to the Irish. Here was a woman whose life was passed amid coarse scenes, drunkenness, brutality, and quarrel, whose strong features showed the frequent working of passion, yet there was a tenderness and fullness of pity for the poor creature above which could not be mistaken. "I give her a herring and a loaf of bread now and then, and do what I can for her." "And where do you live, axing your pardon," said her caro sposo, a thick-set man some ten years younger than Mrs. P., "and who are you? You attend to the poor, may be, and the like of that; if so, there's a family living next door desarving all pity. I'll show you the way," as he put on his stock, which Mrs. P. lovingly pinned, and his buttonless waistcoat and coat, and pulled down his bruised hat. It was only the Sabbath morning, said Mrs. P., that my old man went up to see them, for the man has been in his employ, laying flags, but the work's slack now and he has been lame. And John, he came presently back again, and Jenny, said he, give me the beef, said he, that's in the pot and a loaf of bread, for the poor creatures are starving. It's a week since meat has crossed their mouth, and three days since they've had bread. Oh, sir, broke in John, I came down crying, for it was a sore sight, and Jenny said to me, Don't go for to hurt their feelings, respectable bodies that they are (for she is a tailoring woman, sir, and had seven hundred dollars once which she lost, more's the pity); but, sir, it was famished they were, and I took the food, and it made my eyes water to see how the man cut up the meat into portions for each of the chil-

dren, and took not a piece for himself. No, said he, I cannot eat while the children are hungry. And as I cast my eye on the broad, hard face of Mrs. P., as she stood there with her loose cotton handkerchief around her neck, and the broad dirty ruffle of her cap half showing her iron-gray locks, I found her weeping from the mere remembrance of the scene. But I have not succeeded in representing to you the mingled good and evil, the redeeming traits in the midst of vice, the palliating circumstances and the comic tragedy of the Irish low life, and if I had time I would write you another letter.

With my assurances of grateful and devoted affection.

W. H. C.

The first services in the chapel were held on May 27th. There was an audience of ten, increased to twenty, including those that went out. His wife did noble duty in the great choir of one. He declares that he never preached with more entire ease and satisfaction than he did then, for he had a message to deliver and a duty to discharge. The small attendance was probably accidental on this particular occasion, though the small hall near the Bowery was never full.

At this period he began to preach extemporaneously, a practice which he cultivated until he became one of the foremost speakers in the country, perhaps the most thrillingly eloquent. He adopted this method because it brought him into more close and direct contact with the people, and gave him opportunity to adapt his discourse to the listeners, thus securing their attention. It might seem as if a man of his ardent, discursive mind especially needed the calm concentration of the written sermon. But the extemporaneous manner is peculiarly adapted to one who is rather an inspirer than a teacher, a man who lives

more in large ideas and principles than in careful statements of doctrine. In his case much depended on eye, voice, gesture, presence, bearing of the whole body, immediate relation with his audience, uninterrupted activity of a living soul; and these are best served by the instantaneous utterance. Of course there was mental preparation, a pretty full summary, so that illustration and language only were left to the impulse of the moment; but his command of words was extraordinary, and his range of knowledge immense. He was sensitive, sympathetic, quick, communicative. He felt his auditory, loved to keep his finger on the pulses of those before him, depended on mutual action and reaction. In his best moments his eloquence was enchanting. On special occasions he was sublime as he was dazzling. In the ordinary routine of Sunday ministration he was persuasive and kindling. He endeavored to be simple, practical, direct; to awaken thoughts, to address people as they were, to reach their souls, to make them aware of their moral capacity, of their spiritual greatness; but even then he assumed certain lofty truths that must have sounded mystical and unreal to untutored hearers who were used to definite formulas of belief. The truths were rudimental to him, but not to them, and, however well calculated they might seem to attract the natural mind, they lacked the edge to cut down prejudices that were thick and inveterate.

Still he held on, amid many misgivings of mind and sinkings of heart, with singular persistency, devotion, and faith, with self-renunciation very rare, with daily toil and sacrifice. He was not fitted for that work and he felt he was not, though he was too humble to suspect the reason; which was that he was

a razor, not a pruning-knife. His helpers were few. Fortunately, he was happy in his little home, appreciative of the comic side of things, a good laugh, fond of a joke, — though his wit was by no means subtle, responsive rather than suggestive, slow if anything, at all events not swift, — and grateful for the flowers that occasionally were flung in his path.

This was a year of financial embarrassment, when, besides having less money than usual, people were anxious and troubled about many things. The difficulty of sustaining the mission, together with a general sense of insecurity, may have been answerable in some degree for the drooping of the enterprise, but the chief obstacle lay in the inherent hopelessness of the effort on the part of a few to supplant an old and deeply rooted form of religious conception. The financial troubles were made responsible for the failure, which was complete. Mr. Channing sent his letter of resignation by the middle of August, though he was engaged till November, being unwilling to waste means and strength in carrying further an unfruitful plan. He would not be a burden, nor would he attempt to push forward what he clearly perceived to be a doomed enterprise. He anticipated a ready acceptance of the resignation, though willing to remain if urged. As usual he reproached himself for what was not his fault, for want of earnestness, for lack of devotion to God's service. It was his way. But he was persuaded that a process of subsoiling would have to be executed before a free Unitarian chapel would flourish. The resignation was, under the circumstances of the depression, accepted. But it was resolved to take up the project at a future period, when returning prosperity should warrant the outlay. This

resolution was due to Mr. Marcus Spring, an ardent sympathizer and helper, to whom Mr. Channing wrote an effusive letter, dated September 15th, from Rondout.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I received this morning your letter of the 13th, and first let me thank you most sincerely for the very kind and affectionate manner in which you speak of myself and my efforts in New York. It is no mock modesty, but deep self-reproach, which makes me say I do not deserve this generous estimate, but I thank you for it only the more. Indeed, my dear sir, it is most true that a good opinion of a person tends to make him such as he is supposed to be. You will be made happy by my saying that you have aided me more than any one.

Then comes a warm tribute to Mr. Spring, some advice in regard to teaching, suggestions about teachers' meetings, cordial words to the children of the Sunday-school (to whom he had endeared himself by kindness, and in the religious education of whom he had met with eminent success), and it ends thus: —

I have left but little room to say how happy I am and how much I congratulate you that you succeeded in carrying the resolution you offered that the undertaking should not be abandoned, though postponed. I agree with you entirely too that W —— is exactly the man. I shall speak to him about it when I see him. And now, my dear friend, I will say that much, very much, as I was gratified to learn that I had acquired the respect and confidence of your society, I could not but regret that any proposal was carried to pay my salary until November. Had I thought of such a thing I should have felt myself bound to stay. One object, the chief object, in my resigning when I did, was to prevent that very subscription for further support which I knew would be necessary, as the fund was exhausted. At such times as these, people grudge every penny. This would be

unpleasant even when money was fairly earned, doubly and wholly so when not earned. My resignation virtually dissolved the contract, and I meant that it should. I wish therefore, if you can do it, that you would call upon the gentlemen who were appointed to collect the sum, and request them to stay all further proceedings.

His beloved and revered uncle, who took a fatherly interest in all his concerns and befriended him in every possible way, wrote these words : —

I am sorry you are to leave New York, not for your own sake so much, but because I had hopes that a society might be gathered there on a new plan, or in a new spirit. You have gained something better than success in moral strength and independence. I shall rejoice to have you in Boston, though I am not sure it is the best place for you. So little is doing or aimed at there that a young man is in danger of losing all aspiration. I wish you could give a little time to the West.

So he is adrift again, but with unabated force and zeal, determined to preach in city or village, to write and publish and speak, with an unfaltering trust in God, and an untiring purpose to use every gift, to avail himself of every opportunity. He writes to his mother in terms of grateful joy of his daughter Fanny's birth at Rondout on September 21, 1837. The late autumn was passed in Philadelphia, whither he went to help Dr. Furness, who was temporarily disabled, and who was enthusiastic, as all spiritually minded men were then, about Carlyle. In March of next year he went to preach in Washington, bearing letters of introduction from his uncle to several prominent men, — J. Q. Adams, S. C. Phillips, among the number, — went frequently to the Capitol, and was privileged to hear Mr. Webster's reply to Mr.

Calhoun. In the summer of that year he was in Boston, meditating plans for permanent settlement; preached at Groton and Brighton; listened on July 4th to Mr. Garrison and the popular minister Mr. Winslow, neither of whom he accepted, but the latter of whom he disliked particularly. He passed a night at Concord with Emerson: —

And truly, my dear mother, I do confess myself fascinated. He had been to me before an icy pinnacle only, away in the ether, but as I came nearer I found there was verdure of sweet affections and the beauteous blossoms of lowly thoughts and common herbs around the base. His family delighted me; his fondness for his little boy, his tenderness to his wife, the unaffected politeness and courtesy and the sunny cheerfulness of the man, did more to win me than all his lofty contemplations. We had a great deal of interesting talk. He read me, too, many letters from Carlyle, in one of which he says that another chapter seems plainly to be getting forward. Mr. E. suggested that it might be a life of the man who knew when to use the whiff of grape-shot. The “Miscellanies” are out in two volumes, to be followed by two more, and I have been looking over them with new wonder. He first began to write in 1827, only eleven years ago, and think of the cart-load of *seed thoughts* which in that time he has literally scattered! He is a glorious fellow, say what they will of him.

I have passed a day or two with my friend Parker, of Spring Street, quite an interesting and a most learned man. He has a sweet wife, too. I was a day and night with James Perkins, also, so you see I am but little in town.

In September, having satisfied himself in regard to the feeling with respect to his wife’s religious views and consequent inability to attend Unitarian services, and the attitude towards freedom of speech on disputed subjects, he accepted an invitation to preach six

months at Cincinnati as the successor of Ephraim Peabody. H. W. Bellows, William Silsbee, J. F. Clarke, James Perkins, predicted for him a great success, and he had excellent hope of his new ministry. He was in good health and spirits. The only drawback was the temporary separation from his wife and child, but this obstacle was soon removed, so that he could look forward to a united home in the growing West. His mother was at Grand Rapids in Michigan, a good way off, but that was nearer than Cambridge or Boston. Railway communication was promised, and he could look forward confidently to being in the same house with her, either as her host or as her guest. Thus he had his trustiest friends, a large sphere, spiritual work to do, and a prospect of usefulness bright enough to gladden any man's heart.

VII.

CINCINNATI.

CINCINNATI was then a small city. The congregation was scattered and broken, but the will was strong and the feeling was admirable. There were some fine, vigorous, liberal, freedom-loving people. One man in particular, a lawyer of consideration from Camden, South Carolina, where he could not live because it was a slave State, Mr. Channing admired exceedingly. This man was a pillar in the Unitarian society, and a host in himself. There was his cousin, intimate, almost brother, James Perkins, a singularly gifted man, most remarkable for moral and spiritual qualities, rising into eminence as a man of letters, the future minister at large, and in the end the successor of Mr. Channing in the pulpit. His friend J. F. Clarke was not far off. In December he journeyed to Pittsburgh in the fond anticipation of meeting his wife and child; but the season was judged to be too late for them to travel, and they stayed in Rondout. But he fell in by the way with a most interesting man, a farmer, a Campbellite, liberal, independent, an ardent friend of liberty, whose frank, congenial companionship beguiled the time. Channing, to his surprise, beat him at walking. They had a great deal to say about politics and religion.

Mr. Channing was delighted with the situation of Cincinnati, and spoke enthusiastically of the progress

of the city in the liberal arts and in the appurtenances of intellectual life, Athenæum, Public Library, and so forth. The Sunday-school was flourishing. A Bible class was organized. The clerical spirit was departing. The dogmatic temper was almost gone. There was abundance of life, rather exuberant on the material side, but with a strong mental impulse, promising a final supremacy of mind. A good deal of antislavery feeling was displayed in a public discussion between a colonizationist and an abolitionist, in which the colonizationist got the better, being the more amiable, eloquent, and emotional person. One of the moderators of the meeting had stirred up the mob three years before; another was a leading abolitionist who had come near having his house sacked; and a third, S. P. Chase, had headed the party that put the mob down, though not an abolitionist. Thus all the signs were favorable.

The society, neither large nor rich, paid off a debt of ten thousand dollars as a preliminary to their invitation. The salary was fifteen hundred dollars a year. In March, 1839, Mr. Channing accepted a unanimous call to be their permanent pastor, feeling sure that he had awakened an amount of religious interest which was dormant before. He was going to the East to be ordained, and expected to bring back with him his wife and daughter. In the mean time he boarded in a pleasant family, and was devoted to his professional work. It was by no means light. What with Bible classes, discussions, the "Semi-Colon" Club, musical and literary coteries, reform societies, the time was filled up. The meeting-house, of the traditional Gothic, was pleasant to the eye and was useful on other days than Sundays. The congregation increased

in numbers and in spirit. New converts came in. Old ones felt a fresh enthusiasm. Individuals were stimulated and touched.

The ordination took place in Cincinnati, after all; for Dr. Channing, whom he wanted, could not come so far, being exhausted by writing an essay on slavery, and besides having engaged to preach Mr. Dewey's dedication sermon of the new church building in New York. So the ceremony was performed by Western clergymen on the second Sunday in May, Hosmer, Clarke, and Eliot officiating. Thus he was settled for a time in a city of forty thousand inhabitants, growing, liberal, independent, central, a point of influence, with intellectual life all about him, a large experience behind, a happy future before; at present a little barren, indeed, of family comforts, but rich in affectionate feelings and wide sympathies. His mind had a broad horizon, his heart a large, warm intercourse with friends, his soul an unlimited expanse for aspiration. His uncle wrote: "Our accounts from William are very cheering. My faith in him never wavered. The difficulty was for him to find a sphere where he could act freely, and he seems to have found it now, nor do I know a better one."

In February, 1839, James Handasyd Perkins became minister at large in Cincinnati, friends at the East helping the enterprise; and this arrangement, perfectly satisfactory to everybody and most delightful to his old crony, cousin, and playmate, was especially pleasant because voluntarily assumed. Mr. Perkins was in the right place. He was universally trusted; deeply interested in the work; with no domestic cares to distract him; and an admirable, helpful wife, economical, earnest, single-minded, judicious.

The two could labor lovingly together, with complete understanding and sympathy, both being of one heart, both having the same faith and hope. It was almost too good to be true, and made Cincinnati quite an ideal place.

In April Mr. Channing went to Louisville, Kentucky, to visit his friend J. F. Clarke. There was an overflow of talk. One morning in walked a stout, cleanly man, with a fur cap pulled over his eyes, an iron-gray surtout the worse for wear (the metal of the buttons shining through the covers), a riding-whip in his hand, an expression of shrewdness and good-humor suffusing his features, come to ask them out to see his family. This was Judge Speed, a native, self-educated, and now in his old age. His carriage appeared in due time, took them five miles into the country, and stopped at a large brick house about a quarter of a mile from the road. His farm, a mile square, was of the richest land thereabout. His household was very interesting, bound closely together by a recent affliction which rendered affecting their mutual attachment. He was a freethinker, his wife was an Episcopalian, two daughters were Unitarians, the sons were more interested in Methodism than in anything; but these differences drew them to each other, and made them catholic in their judgments. In the evening there was a discussion on slavery, so fair, kind, and well-mannered that Mr. Channing concluded that there was more liberality and freedom in Kentucky than in New England. The sons charmed him by their simple, natural, frank demeanor and their direct but refined manners. The old gentleman took his guests to see the lodgings of the "people," of whom he spoke with "much interest and pity." This

was a favorable specimen of a plantation, and yet the condition of the slaves is described as being "sad enough."

Much of the talk with Clarke related to the "Messenger," then published at Louisville. To this Channing was a regular contributor, writing thoughtful, able, and searching articles on Christian themes, combining the new spirit with scholarly topics in a brilliant way. He had learning as well as a quick fancy, and a remarkably penetrating mind, thoroughly imbued with the modern temper. He was an alert, vigorous, graceful writer, with a gift of facile expression. His brain tingled with thoughts. All the burning questions were on his lips. He abhorred sectarianism in every form, but pure religion had his homage. His preaching was brave, bold, spiritual; never dogmatical or polemical, but philosophical, living, practical, in the better sense evangelical. His disposition was generous and humane. He was aristocratic by birth, breeding, association, but democratic by conviction, a hearty republican, an American in every fibre, anxious to do something for his kind. He knew no distinction of persons. Qualities alone attracted him, and they always did, in whatsoever garb they were arrayed. His humility was profound. His honesty was unflinching. His courage never quailed. But for the time he basked in the sunshine and was himself.

He was in Cincinnati about three years, useful, beloved, happy, an important member of the community. He had strong hold of individuals, was known by the poor and the disconsolate. His family had been with him long. His son was born there. The din in Massachusetts reached Ohio slowly. The noise

of the Unitarian controversy did not disturb the peace of that distant vale. Channing had heard with admiration Mr. Emerson's famous Divinity School Address, but Mr. Emerson was no iconoclast, simply a spiritual seer. Carlyle was a prophet. Margaret Fuller was a sibyl. The philosophy of Transcendentalism was purely interior, assuming the insight of the soul, and exalting human nature. It was the philosophy of Unitarianism in its newest, most enticing form, lending itself easily to the doctrines of faith. It suggested belief rather than doubt, aspiration rather than inquiry. So that the student might sit in his study, planning his sermons, arranging his lectures, blocking out his novels, and meditating his devotions, unanxious. In November, 1840, he signed, along with others, abolitionists, associationists, rationalists, transcendentalists, come-outers, the call for the Chardon Street Convention, assembled to discuss the claims of the Sabbath, the Church, the Ministry. There is no full report of this convention. Dr. Channing was there, though as a critical listener only. So were Emerson, Ripley, Parker, and Lowell. Edmund Quincy presided. The literature of "infidelity" began to come. Parkerism was in the air. The sermon on "The Transient and Permanent in Christianity" was preached in May, 1841. This was followed in 1842 by the "Discourse of Matters pertaining to Religion." Channing listened, pondered, read. For the first time, it would appear, critical misgivings obtruded themselves on his mind. The results of old and new study, hitherto repressed by self-depreciation or active work, came to the front, and demanded recognition. In 1840, he valiantly resisted an attempt made by six orthodox clergymen to exclude Unitarianism from the Divinity School.

rians from the Young Men's Christian Association. In 1841, when this number was increased to nine, he published a letter with remarks in which he used the expression "Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," and on the plea of Christian unity and charity offered an argument for brotherhood. But later his views were changed. With his usual outspokenness and sincerity he acted on his conviction, deciding that he could no longer preach a gospel he did not fully believe in. His interest in it was gone. Jesus, he thought, was not the person he was reputed to be. The Gospels were unreliable as history. Christianity was not a divine institution. There was no revelation from Heaven. There was no supernatural church, no priesthood ordained by the Holy Ghost. The primary faiths in God and immortality were retained as fundamental persuasions of the soul, not as express disclosures through Christ. In a word, he became a deist, and resigned his place accordingly. His people, who had become strongly attached to him, begged him to stay on any terms, even, as has been wittily said, offering to pay him no salary; but he was not able to do it conscientiously, consequently he was unable to do it at all. Some could never understand his scruples, and when, years afterwards, one of the society was asked why Mr. Channing left, he replied that he never knew; he thought it was because the minister was of opinion that Jesus Christ did not understand his own religion! — the fact being that Mr. Channing had come to the conclusion that "Christianity" was not the religion of Jesus Christ.

So this was the end of the ministry at Cincinnati; the end, too, of a strictly Unitarian ministry. A humanitarian ministry, under a new conception of Christ

and his mission, was afterwards instituted. Mr. Perkins took the vacant place in the pulpit, thus fulfilling an old prophecy that he was meant for a preacher, and once more the wanderer was in search of a spiritual house. He went back to Cambridge to consider again the problem of his own destiny and the future of religion. There is no reason to think that he meditated the final abandonment of his calling; he had preached too long for that; he felt himself called to it, and his uncle's example was ever before him; but for the time being he was thrown back on his own soul, which soon asserted itself as it had done before. His career, as it proved, was about to open, never to close again.

The service in Cincinnati was by no means fruitless. The spirit of the liberal faith had been exhibited at its best. The faith itself had been commended to the outside world. Irreligious men had been reached. Humane dispositions had been confirmed and extended. Charitable organizations had been set on foot. A beautiful temper of trust had been engendered in individual bosoms. Religion was associated with work, besides being thoroughly imbued with a spirit of aspiration. The purest of characters had been presented, and a singularly lofty life had been witnessed day by day. The succession of his cousin, James Perkins, was a continuation of his ministry. For Mr. Perkins, beside being closely associated with him in benevolent activities, was a most transparent soul, a man of deep religious feeling, eloquent, persuasive, an admirable extemporaneous speaker, a devout Christian. So long as he lived, until his melancholy death, the traditions of William Henry Channing in Cincinnati were prolonged.

In 1842 Mr. Channing addressed a long letter to the parish in Cincinnati. In 1878 he read over this epistle, adopting it with fullest approval, and rejoicing that thus early he was permitted to "see the daybreak of a morning that" was then "brightening to full noon." In 1880 the "First Congregational Church" in Cincinnati celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, and invited its former pastor to participate. He responded in a glowing missive, pleasantly reviewing the past, eulogizing his predecessors as well as those that came after him, and expatiating on his own faith. In this communication he alludes to his letter of nearly forty years before. Here is the substance of it:—

. . . I rejoice that a time has now arrived in which I can open to you my mind more fully; for in parting from you I purposely withheld an exposure of the deepest mental perplexities, which were my chief inducement to leave the ministry. I chose rather to be misunderstood and blamed than to affect your minds with the contagion of my doubts. But now these doubts are passed, and from a higher ground of faith I can invite your sympathy. . . . During the last year of my ministry among you, speculations which had long interested my mind attained some degree of completeness, and led me finally to conclusions quite at variance with the faith generally held by Christians. I felt that I was gradually assuming a ground very different from that occupied by the denomination from which I had received my education and ordination, and very different from that upon which you understood me to place myself when I became your minister. But two courses, therefore, seemed open to me in honor. The one was to make a full and explicit confession of the new views which, as a man of sincerity, I was more or less distinctly preaching to you,—leaving it to you to judge whether we should retain our connection on

this new foundation. The other was to retire from you and from the pulpit of the Unitarian denomination, and either to be silent, or to preach independently. More than once I made up my mind to take the first of these two courses; but when, with the deepest desire for light from above to guide me, I asked myself whether I was called to do it, I found my opinions too superficial to authorize me in adopting so responsible a mode of conduct. Plainly I was not ripe nor ready; and plainly, therefore, I was to be silent. So with a sad heart but a clear conscience, I bade you farewell. I have no wish to describe at length the views I held last spring, for a year's study and thought have greatly modified them, and I do not see that a statement of them would do any good. But I can sum them up briefly by saying that, though my reverence and love for the character of Jesus had never been stronger, and though I regarded him as under the influence of God's Spirit, and so received his words and acts as full to overflowing of the divinest truth and beauty, I yet doubted whether the force of powerful excitement and the impression of Jewish associations had not in some degree affected his judgment, and led him to erroneous and exaggerated views of his own mission. And further, I doubted whether the overpowering interest and emotion which his goodness and eloquence had awakened in his followers' minds were not so strong as to unfit them to be accurate reporters of his life; and whether what seemed miraculous in his history was not rather to be ascribed to the effect which his greatness wrought upon the minds around him than to be received as a strict narrative of facts. While admitting to the full, therefore, the profound truth of the words of Jesus, and the surpassing loveliness of his life, I was yet inclined to look upon him rather as a beautiful manifestation of human nature, under uncommon circumstances, than as peculiarly, and in sublime reality, the Son of God. I loved him as a friend, I thankfully opened my heart to the influence of his

devotedness and love, his name was still the symbol to me of all that was most gracious and aspiring in our moral nature. But it seemed to me as if there were many provinces of man's being upon which the Christian religion, at least as taught in our churches, threw little light. And I questioned whether there was not a prevalent tyranny of belief in Christian communities which was unfavorable to the truest manliness, and whether against these prejudices one was not called upon to protest. From this brief description you will probably be inclined to agree with me that, however right or wrong in such opinions, I was in a state of mind which made it proper for me to retire from the pulpit and from the Christian ministry as at present organized. . . . You will observe that the essential idea of the opinions which I held in relation to Jesus was this : that, under the influence of a powerful inspiration of goodness, combined with associations derived from the Jewish prophecies, he had been led to form an exaggerated estimate of himself. For it seemed to me impossible to ascribe his remarkable expressions relative to his mission to the misconceptions of his apostles. But the impression was most painful that so grand a spirit as this prophet of Nazareth should have been thus deluded, even if his delusion grew out of an excessive action of the holiest and purest feelings. This part of the theory I had adopted I could not heartily hold to, could not nakedly state to another mind. It seemed an outrage upon the exquisite moral symmetry of the Son of Man. At last I determined once again to study his whole life more profoundly than I had done in my repeated previous efforts to comprehend the true meaning of his appearance among men. I did so. I collected together, arranged, analyzed, all the wonderful utterances, transmitted by the Evangelists, in which Jesus signified his sense of relation to God, and to the human race ; and the more I pondered these mighty words, so unapproached in sublimity by anything elsewhere to be found

in human experience, the more I felt prompted to bow my intellect in humbled awe. Here was a mystery I could not fathom, a reality which I could not explain by an overmastering enthusiasm of a religious nature. If ever on this earth a man has spoken from the calm elevation of knowledge, that man was Jesus. I admit his majestic claim, I grant him to have been precisely what he announced himself. His connection with God, his place among mankind, is the glorious one that with such commanding dignity he assumed. . . . It is a great misfortune that the name "miracle" has been thus materialized and limited to the sensible, visible, tangible effects of his ministry on earth. For plainly the Spirit of his Life and the Influence of his Life upon all human history since his time are the grand miracles. But to leave these considerations, I repeat, the change in my mind relative to the position which Jesus Christ occupied among men gave a new aspect to the superhuman powers attributed to him. If he was really the being he described himself to be, so far from its being unnatural that he should restore degraded humanity to the possession of all its faculties, and have all the material world in harmonious coöperation with his will of love, and reappear to strengthen the faith and hope of his disciples, it would really have been strange and a fair ground of suspicion if he had not done thus. Miracles seem only natural in a man made one with him, who is the Life of all life, and the Spirit of all spirits. When with this eye of faith we read the narrative of the Evangelists, it is truly admirable to see how the character of this peerless being is preserved in the most unexampled circumstances, and by what undesigned coincidences the testimony of his disciples is corroborated. I am far from saying that careful criticism will detect no probable errors in the biographies of Jesus, but I acknowledge I have not a doubt that his words and acts were attended by results far surpassing the effects of any known agency of man. . . .

It is exceedingly difficult, without the use of vague and superlative terms, to describe what we distinctly feel, when studying the life of Jesus, in relation to the beauty of his character,—it is so fresh, so peculiar, so faultless. His least word and act is instinct with a delicate spirituality, as if by some deeper, finer sense he perceived as present realities what even the best of men have known only through a veil and darkly. To him the unseen world of life seems visibly open. He has, if we may use the expression, a consciousness of God, quite transcending that devoutness which we call piety. Jesus is, while on earth, in the bosom of the Father. His spirit is not visited transiently by rays of this divine light, but he walks in the noontide brightness of God's abiding love. Again, when we consider the profound wisdom and strength which seemed to be the natural effect of this steady vision of God, how wonderful they are! What a depth in that full river of duty, which rolled so unbroken through his whole career! No turmoil, no restlessness, no after-thought, no precipitancy, no unsteady purposes, no hesitating choice; but every word, every deed, so complete, sufficing, and in perfect harmony with time and place, that by a common recognition of their significance and eloquence the human race has received them as perennial maxims and symbols. The acts and words of Jesus have the resistlessness, the inevitableness, of a law of nature. And then his peace! We speak of Jesus as a man of sorrows. But his griefs are wholly for others. You feel, as you gaze on him, that not one string of feeling is broken or untuned; no chagrins, no shames, no hidden mortifications, no inward strife, no fear! A serene calm, as of an atmosphere without a cloud, enfolds him; a quiet joy exhaustlessly wells up, brims over, and flows around in the most expansive love that has ever freshened earth. It is indeed chiefly in the contemplation of his love that we are subdued in grateful amazement. At last, here is a man who in his very inmost heart loves

all men as brethren. In this son of a Jewish peasant is a sympathy to which all souls are open, all hearts known. There is no absorption of mind here in his own thoughts and feelings ; no lofty indifference to the trifling interests of common humanity ; no coldly critical observation of character ; no contempt. But a full heart makes the present moment, the present person, sacred with peculiar interest. What fullness of allusion in his slightest word ! How he seems to comprehend and touch the very centre of all events ! He sees so distinctly through the men he moves among that their thoughts come clearer from his lips than from their own. The plainest incident leaves its traces in his all-encircling sensibility. You read in the effects on those around him the mighty sweetness of his glance and smile, until you cease to wonder that the child should spring to his bosom, and the leper, whom all men scouted, should take him by the hand. Yes ! Jesus was filled with love ; one with Him whose essence is Love ; till from the beam of his eye, the gesture of his hand, the wave of his garment, there went forth a benignant power to bless. And the chief wonder in this surpassing loveliness is its spontaneous freedom. There seems to be scarcely so much of what we call self-government as of an utter absence of a SELF to be governed, so pervaded does he appear to be by an unlimited, irresistible, and simple moral life. In Jesus we see no struggle, no effort. What he does and says could not but be done and said ; and nothing else would so well befit the moment. Unpremeditating as a child, he has a composed presence of mind that puts to shame the craftiest worldling. No danger, no exigency, no surprise, for an instant betrays him. Before an instinctive sagacity, which no film shrouds, the truth stands bare. This impulsive, vigorous, healthy spontaneity of virtue is the crowning glory of Jesus, and his commanding charm. Now what is the conviction irresistibly impressed upon us by the sight of this matchless man ? How shall we account for his sus-

tained elevation? How explain his singleness, his unchangeableness, his easy, unstrained consistency, his freedom from remorse or from need of repentance? Is there not something Divine in this perfected beauty of virtue? There is but one adequate answer, — it is the one made by his followers: “The Spirit was given to him without measure;” “He was filled with the Fullness of God.” And when our best powers — heart, intellect, and conscience — unitedly concentrate in admiration of his singular excellence, we are not surprised at, but are prepared for, his own declarations: “I am in the Father and the Father in me;” “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;” “I and the Father are one.” We need not wonder that men have worshiped Jesus as God. However much we may differ from Trinitarian philosophy, there has been a profound meaning in the orthodox faith, that in a sublime and mysterious way God incarnated himself in Christ. But now why is it that, when most overpowered by a sense of the greatness of the heavenly glory of Jesus, then it is that we feel most nearly drawn to him? He does not seem to us in his highest moments as a being of another race. He is no angel. But then, when most inspired, does he seem to us most human. How beautiful his friendship! — “I have called you friends,” to the simple souls he had gathered round him. . . . We need not be surprised, then, that students of the life and character of Jesus have gone so far in asserting, as if jealously desiring to claim a brotherhood with this heroic being, that Jesus was simply, purely, a man. Differ though we do from their conclusions, we may yet well honor the earnest love of an ideal human nature, which prompts them to aspire to kindred with this Son of Man. . . . There are signs of promise in our age that the attempt to reconcile all Christians into one church, truly catholic, so often made, so constantly disappointed, will at last be blessed with success. And perhaps this reconciliation between Trinitarians and Unitarians, Supernaturalists

and Naturalists, Orthodox and Rationalists, will be effected by means of a clearer, deeper perception that there is a grand central truth, of which their opposite systems were but imperfect statements. Human nature is in all ages and nations essentially the same; its inherent elements, though variously developed, are intrinsically the same; and very much the same problems, though under different forms, appear anew, though perhaps in each successive generation, in proportion to the harmonious culture of human powers, with a nearer approximation to complete solution. Perhaps we in our day shall come to comprehend clearly what the Fathers apprehended, when they taught the doctrine of a sublime union of the divine and human nature in Christ. Let us ask whether Jesus had not a deeper meaning in the use of the phrases by which he designates himself: The "Son of Man," the "Son of God," — phrases which he seems to use as correlatives, as equivalent terms, translatable into each other: let us ask, I say, whether he had not a deeper meaning in his constant, emphatic use of these phrases than merely to announce himself to the Jews as their expected Messiah. For one, I am convinced he had. I am convinced that he thus intended to symbolize the profound significance of his appearance among men. I am convinced that words could not have been selected better fitted than these to state, with even scientific accuracy, the peculiar nature, character, and office of Jesus Christ. Jesus, I believe, was the Son of Man and also the Son of God, — the Man in God; and in a certain sense, too, God in Man. And I find no brief middle term in which so completely may be signified the two sides of the one central truth, manifested in Christ, as the double name — so time-hallowed in the Church, the often abused, the yet oftener honored, the mystical, and yet profoundly philosophical, double name — God-man. To me Jesus is a God-man. . . .

And has not an approach been made to a solution of this

long-agitated problem of man's twofold nature? Yes! Notwithstanding the variety of philosophical systems which this generation of man is called to ponder, there are, I think, plain signs of a profounder agreement among thinking men than the world has ever seen. Physiologists on the one side, and Idealists on the other, seem at last to be approximating to this sublime conclusion — that man stands at the very crowning point of the animal creation; and yet that he is more than, and different from, an animal in his peculiar power of knowing truth as Truth, of loving good as Good, of doing right as Right; in the endowment of a free, feeling, and intelligent soul, through which he may be acted upon by the mighty spiritual energy manifested throughout the universe, and from whose deep spring of spiritual energy within he may react upon this universe again, and so grow up in his very self to be a living spirit. . . . If the universe may be symbolized as the Grand Overture of God's glory, then may man be called the Articulate Word which interprets the music of Nature's countless instruments. Perhaps a truer description could not be given of man than by saying that he is Nature's last consummate work, ready and fitted to be born into the freedom of the spirit. By the reception of a spiritual birth the animal becomes man; and the essential characteristic of manhood is this power of receiving a spiritual life, this power of receiving truth and good and power into himself, and so becoming one with them. God fulfills his manifestation of himself in creating a being capable of imaging and multiplying, by reflection, that ineffable glory of which the whole creation is an imperfect representative. And so man is, in his very essence, moral and religious; subject to the law of truth and good and beauty; living to aspire and to grow and to become a free spirit. The animal ascends into man that man may ascend into heaven. And the whole meaning and explanation of earthly life is that it is a process of immortal birth. . . . In every country and nation, in all

languages and tongues, men have, as with one general voice, acknowledged human depravity. . . . To whatever cause we may ascribe it, whether first to the remaining vitality of a traditional religion, or second to the instinctive craving of the soul for growth, or third to the direct inspiration of God, or fourth to all combined, the fact is that human history has been one long-continued scene of struggle. The millions may have seemed to sleep the sleep of death, but even the vast multitudes have been heaved and impelled by mighty convictions, which have more or less guided them into the channels scooped out by Providence. And always has the earth seen some few faithful ones, who through the dark night have watched for the breaking of day. Time permits here no discussion of this mystery of sin and of redemption. My only object is in these remarks to show, first, the universal consciousness of depravity ; and, secondly, the universal longing for redemption from this death-in-life of sin. . . . Will not the last age of man see plainly, what we may now only conjecture, that in human affairs no confusion has really entered ; that, in all this tangled web of events, not one thread has actually been broken or displaced ; but that, from generation to generation, as in the growth of a living organization, God, through every individual and people, has been advancing the symmetrical, complete development of man ? This is my faith, and I think we may even now see that there has been a grand unity and order in the progress of humanity. . . . From this brief philosophical and historical survey, you will understand, my friends, the position which I believe Christianity to occupy in relation to the human race. It is the fulfillment of the whole past ; it is the promise of the whole future. It is the beginning of a new moral creation of man. . . . Transfigured humanity ! — this is the grand symbol of Christianity. The past aspirations of the human race for purified and hallowed wills, the future prophecy of beatitude in hearts redeemed from sin and self-

ishness, met and mingled on the Mount of Transfiguration. It was the sunrise of a new day for man. . . . In the mission of one man, redeemed from iniquity, made one with God, transfigured by the Spirit, filled with life, overflowed by the mighty power of love, was given a message of hope and encouragement and refreshment which can never die. One man has lived in God, with God, for God, — a divine life. One mind has been transparent to truth, one heart has been pure in love, one body has been hallowed to the divinest energy of good. And shall not he be a spiritual father to countless multitudes? Sin was vanquished, death was slain, human misery destroyed, in the love of Jesus Christ made perfect through suffering. The early Christians, with touching beauty, call the cross the Tree of Life. Yet when for generation upon generation man had eaten of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, and in his self-conceit and pride of heart and willfulness had lost true spiritual insight and communion, then in that wilderness of exile did God by his full inspiration send one man to live in love, and so to plant anew in his own grave and water with his own blood the Tree of Life. . . . Wherever was planted a little brotherhood of believers, there did a new shoot of the tree of heaven grow up to scatter fruit in ever wider circles. And thus from age to age does the power of good and truth extend ; till in the fullness of time brothers shall worship their Father once again in a recovered Eden. . . . We need even now, in this Eighteenth Century of the Church, a new outpouring of the spirit of adoption. We need to feel, as few feel, the sacredness and glory of our daily life, of our simple relations, of our common affections. We need to see the “earth, the skies, become an opening paradise,” beneath the glory of an all-present Father. We need a new sense of our privileges, so that we may be bold to aspire, and fervent to pray, and patient to wait, and cheerful to rejoice. Men do not dare to believe themselves the sons of God.

The promise in Jesus is in vain for them. They dare not see in his transfigured beauty their inmost, best, perfected selves. The Church shall prepare the way for a universal regeneration of all man's powers. Awakened by the anthem and hallelujah of human hope, thought and enterprise, art and science, shall find wings once more, and fill the earth with a beautiful life. Man, the son of God, should, in our day, be the words to carve on our lintels, and write on our door-posts, and wear as a frontlet. Faith in this sonship to God would disenthral individual and national life. Such a faith would make the world a temple, and it would be our perpetual worship to be men. . . . We have not learned the meaning of a love pure and deep enough to glorify the lowest deed of kindness. Shame to the Church that she has wasted ages in splitting hairs by sifting dogmas, when human hearts were breaking under the miseries of mortality. What can revive society from its all-pervading selfishness, what can sweeten those bitter fountains of wrong and injustice? Nothing but a deeper faith in man's destiny, man's nature, man's hopes, man's relations. Men use their brethren as tools for their base purposes, they make them their beasts of burden, they bow their necks for footstools, and water the earth with the sweat of their unceasing toil, because they see nothing in man to love or to honor. A new baptism of hope for man as the son of God would bind all men into brotherhood. The work of the Church, then, in our day is plain. A church should be a brotherhood. . . . A church should be in some sort a community: not by any vulgar sharing, by square and exact measurements, of the outward goods of life; but by an habitual and living conviction that the only true end of life is growth, and that all means of growth are given in stewardship, for the widest possible usefulness. A church should be a band of mutual educators, feeling it a common privilege and duty to diffuse one to another the highest life of mind and heart. . . . Who can doubt that

a desire to glorify God in a PERFECTED SOCIAL LIFE would raise communities to an intelligence, virtue, and refinement, to a prosperity and glory, such as would cast into shadow the most gorgeous monarchies?

While in Cincinnati he wrote a long letter to Mr. A. Bronson Alcott, part of which was printed, in which he says of Jesus:—

He does not fulfill the whole longing of the soul. He has not the reposing grace of the Grecian, not the iron nerve of the Roman, not the clear science and practical skill of the Saxon; the romance, the mirth of humanity, are not there. Yet has he infinitely more, and that which he has all men need as they do nothing else, even that prophetic spirituality,—a monotone though it was. . . . I see these falling leaves of grand traditions with sorrow, though springing buds push them off.

Clearly his rationalism could not even then, in 1840, get the better of the triumphant humanity and soaring idealism of his nature. His longing was for a “true church.”

But that the minister was not in a gloomy state of mind appears from the following to Margaret Fuller, written just after the step was taken. To her naturally he confided his wishes and intentions.

CINCINNATI, *April 15, 1841.*

You heard aright. The words are spoken. The stag is free. I told my people all I thought it best they should know; and so perfectly simple and true have been our relations that they repose on my judgment as simply as friend trusts friend. Deeply attached are they to me, but they do not doubt me. They know I am thinking as much of them, in what I have done, or more than of myself. And our hands never grasped more warmly, our eyes never looked more frankly into each other's, speech was never

calmer, kinder, than now that I have by my own act, and against their earnest desire, cut the bond that held us. So you see it is farewell. We have done each other good, and are friends evermore. I have done right, — of this I am clear; conscience has a deep peace such as I never felt, and inwardly I was never happier. I have done right. Not that this course might have been right for another. But it is past. Let it sink softly, to be overgrown with flowers of memory, in the grave of forgetfulness. It is difficult, impossible, for me, indeed, to communicate the results of my inward experiences, — thoughts I can hardly call them. Therefore have I always been, always shall be, reserved. It is my best health to be so. I dearly love to listen, to observe, to hold playful talks, or, wing fanning wing, to soar dizzily with a friend, or, deep cutting, to explore the central fires beneath the green crust of life. But the true inward life I cannot tell. I am no poet. Only this I do know about this last year, these last few months. There has been a deluge, an upheaving, a down-sinking; the granite spires of new mountain-chains of faith, white with heaven's bounties, tower up; even the green valleys of quiet feelings here and there open; the wide plains of active usefulness somewhat appear: and all within and without, as if in steaming mists, ascends the grateful hymn, "A new heaven and a new earth. Lo! All things are become new." But I cannot name these new things. They have no name. Customariness only and frequent associations will baptize them and describe them scientifically.

But let me stop my parable. This habit of allegorizing and symbolizing is forever running away with me. No thoughts come to me bare, and as Henry More said of thoughts, that he had to cut his way through a forest of them, so I may say of myself, my feet are ever tangled in a flowery jungle of fancies. But by and by I shall grow simpler. I was much struck by one thought in a letter of yours, — "You every day feared more and more talking too finely." You will find me very silent this summer, if

we have the happiness to meet. I shall not blow open my buds ; I shall not force my fallow fields. My present genius is stupidity ; so be forewarned, dear friend, that I am a lazy ox turned out to grass to fatten. . . . A more utterly uninteresting personage you have never met with. . . .

And yet, playfulness apart, there is a wisdom, not shallow perhaps, in this mood. My scheme of life is so simple that it needs still sunshine, like a harvest field. To be a workingman, poor, humble ; to perform without show or shunning menial services ; to live content with small means ; to seek elegance rather than luxury, and refinement rather than fashion ; to be worthy, not respectable ; and wealthy, not rich ; to study hard, think quietly, talk gently, act frankly ; to have an oratory in my own heart, and present spotless sacrifices of dignified kindness in the temple of humanity ; to spread no opinions glaringly out like show-plants, and yet leave the garden gate ever open for the chosen friend and the chance acquaintance ; to make no pretenses to greatness ; to seek no notoriety ; to attempt no wide influence ; to have no ambitious projects ; to let my writings be the daily bubbling spring flowing through constancy, swelled by experiences, into the full, deep river of wisdom ; to listen to stars and buds, to babes and sages, with open heart ; to bear all cheerfully, do all bravely, await occasions, hurry never ; . . . in a word, to let the spiritual, unbidden and unconscious, grow up through the common. This is to be my symphony. A pretty dream ? A sober prophecy !

You shall think and say, dear friend, that I lack earnestness, if you so incline ; but you shall not, powerful as your attraction is, draw me to swerve from my orbit.

The world has seen enthusiasts enough. . . . Just as I had finished came your package and the volume. Really, one feels so overpowered by the spring showers that the flower-cups droop. A white stone for to-day.

Ever,

W. H. C.

The ensuing letter concerns the "Dial," which was established in 1840, and his contribution to its pages called "Ernest the Seeker," together with his own mental condition. The allusion to his struggle is significant.

CINCINNATI, *February 25, 1840.*

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I received your letter with great joy, and have been so long withheld from answering it from no indifference as to the proposed publication (the "Dial"). At the time it arrived my mind was entirely absorbed in some inquiries, which I felt I must pursue to a termination before I could do anything else; and now that I am free, I am unaffectedly diffident as to my powers of accomplishing anything for you of much worth. I will, though, tell you of one prospect, that has been coming in glimpses and vanishing in shadows in my mind, this year or two. All feel the midnight of our present religious or irreligious era. We are all "seekers." The idea occurred to me of taking a young man, and leading him through the chief sects, the Catholic, the Methodist, the Quakers, the Unitarians, drawing from each its lesson, which would be found, of course, in its spirit and guiding principles, not in its opinions; then guiding him to a love of Jesus in himself, thence to his own soul as the temple of the Spirit, and thence to life and society as the true sphere for his own development. I would call this spiritual hero Ernest (True, or) the Seeker; his search should be, first in sects, second in Scripture, third in the soul, and fourth in society. This would be a religious novelette; it might be printed in chapters, and its success would depend upon the amount and worth of my own experience. In some form or other, and at some time or other, I shall probably complete this plan; and if you think, coming piecemeal, it would suit the character of the unknown periodical, I do not know but I am ready to begin. Have no hesitation in saying nay, if head or heart so incline; for though I see plainly

enough that such a plan offers a grand opportunity for representing various classes of character and the multiplied movements of mind in society around, and withal to utter one's own best thought, I do not feel wholly fitted now, at least, for this work. You ask me what part I proposed to play in the grand concert. Frankly, I intended to be a listener only ; but I am not so selfish and lazy as to grudge any aid which my efforts can give. I fear much that we shall be obliged to give up our publication here ; and in that case I should with a better prospect unite with you, for I could better command my time and thought. Do tell me, when you write, more of your plans, and of the proposed character of this periodical ; I can then judge better whether I am competent to lend any efficient assistance. I have heard from my sister delightful accounts of your success, and break the tenth commandment often in coveting my neighbor's goods. For myself, I find my chief pleasure in opening to my hearers my whole soul. Week by week I give them the best which the time sends of truth and life, — and I trust some seeds of future peace are sown. But I confess to you I am restless, and not energetic enough to make for myself the sphere I crave. I walk in a consciousness of unemployed force, and see not the when nor the how to make a world out of my chaos. My social nature is defective ; joyfully would I take a few lessons from you in the art of aiding others to find their own souls. This, however, cannot be very edifying or interesting to you, so I will close up the log-book of my voyage.

Yours sincerely,

W. H. CHANNING.

It is manifest that his life is not becoming poorer, but richer, even in his own estimation. What seemed to be destruction did but introduce him to higher speculations. His life was culminating, not declining. His career was before him, and he knew it. His

friends had confidence in him, and his faith in Providence was absolute. He was accustomed to phases of experience as well as of circumstance, and was able to look beyond the passing moment and repose on eternity.

At this period he meditated a new journal, to be called the "Sower," not in opposition to the "Messenger," but supplementary to it, addressed to another class of people in the West, not yet Unitarians; but this design was never carried out.

He thought too of instituting a form of prayers in place of the usual extemporaneous utterance. On this subject he wrote to his friend Clarke, at Louisville, in 1840, in January.

At one of our meetings here the subject of public worship came up for consideration. It was discussed pretty fully, and opinion so much inclined to the side of a form that Perkins and I were made a committee to consider the subject and report. The reasons in favor of a form appear to be: (1.) more attention; (2.) unanimity; (3.) devout habits of mind; (4.) propriety; (5.) a common bond; (6.) the saving the exhaustion of a clergyman's spirit. The objections: (1.) formality; (2.) coldness; (3.) cramping and confining the range of feeling. My mind turns more and more to silent worship. Words are to my feeling more and more inadequate. But of the two I rather incline to think the objections fewest against a written form. A mind must, to be sincere, utter its own petition, struggle in its own way out of the darkness of our common life into the light of communion with God. How can one feeble, oppressed, tempted, and sinful creature utter with any suitable expression the cry of many souls? We may pray for others; we may pray with them, when the occasion is such as a birth, a death, or any uncommon and affecting occurrences bring all souls into one grand current

of feeling. But the Sunday, even if it ought to be, in fact is not such an occasion. Does not a written prayer, present to the eye, become a better nucleus, then, for all these varied emotions? Again, does it not through association become more eloquent than any except the very rarest inspired outpourings of devotion? Think of these things; Talk them over in your society. Then if you find that your own mind and those of your friends turn to a form, what shall it be? Should it be fixed or varying? Should there be several services, or only one? Ought room and opportunity to be given for the introduction of extempore prayer, when the clergyman is moved thereto? I am in favor of several services, and opportunity for extempore prayer. My idea is yet imperfect, but something like this has occurred to me: (1.) voluntary or anthem, or both; (2.) an appeal, or monition, or some passages to prepare the feeling; (3.) adoration, both prayer and chant; (4.) a pause for silent worship; (5.) prayers with responses; (6.) reading and exposition; (7.) singing; (8.) sermon, followed as the occasion may prompt, by prayer or not. I am very anxious to have chants introduced as extensively as possible.

Of course this scheme proved abortive. It was not even debated. Mr. Clarke cannot so much as remember it.

VIII.

THE PROPHET OF THE SOUL.

THE winter of 1841-2 was passed at his mother's house in Cambridge. At this period he was an extreme unbeliever in ecclesiastical institutions and theological formulas, talked with the greatest freedom after the fashion of the hour, and was ranked among the radical reformers of Christian faith. He wrote a letter to Mrs. George Ripley before she went to Brook Farm, in which he gave full expression to his disbelief in Jesus, the Church, religious organizations of every description. This letter was shown, of course without mentioning the authorship, to Dr. Channing, who simply said, in a tone of entire confidence, "This mind is undergoing a process. I think the spirit of truth is its inspiration. Why! William thinks just so, at the present moment,"—as if William were sure to come out a spiritual believer at last.

Soon after he went into the book-room of Miss Peabody, an intimate friend of his mother, and one greatly interested in her son's mental progress. A discussion ensued on the subject of miracles, which he defined, after the manner of Hume, as violations of natural law. In the course of the talk he said that Jesus of Nazareth claimed to work miracles because his love of man was so intense; he wished to annihilate all human diseases, and mistook this impulse of beneficence for the power to set aside natural laws.

But this, his companion replied, is to make him a crazy man. Do you mean to maintain that love may be a criterion of truth? That one may love his neighbor so much that he is excused from attempting to solve the problems of existence? That passion may take the place of intellect? What becomes then of knowledge? What becomes of free will? What becomes of the spirituality of God? Are we not lapsing into a sort of animalism?

To this Mr. Channing gave no answer, and soon went out. After a long period of seclusion from society he appeared again, all radiant, alive, bright, like one who was happy in his own thoughts, and said that he had publicly announced that he would speak at Amory Hall on the next Sunday, and would then offer his solution of the questions proposed some weeks before. In this sermon he gave voice to his new conviction, in jubilant tones proclaiming his faith in God as the universal Father; in Jesus Christ as the perfect man, a king by right of spiritual attainment, endowment, primogeniture, a real mediator, saviour, redeemer from iniquity, calling on all men to become one with the highest truth and love; in man as an immortal child of God and brother of Christ, destined to endless felicity by the divine love, of a heavenly lineage, one, in spite of seeming differences, the full, ultimate incarnation of the Holy Ghost.

This was the great crisis of his moral or religious experience. From this faith he never receded. It became, as life went on, richer, more comprehensive, more definite, but in substance it was unchanged. It explains his peculiar form of socialism, his interest in free religion, his large charity towards the creeds of the world, his enthusiasm of hope, his passion of

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aspiration, his zeal for the elevation of humanity. One does not find it easy to give a precise account of this form of credence. It was a glorified version of his uncle's faith, fitted exactly to his own eager, loving, adoring, believing temperament, leading upward from the naturalistic level of Unitarianism, and combining in singular union the ardors of Platonic orthodoxy with the freedom of rationalistic liberalism. The dogmatical element in it was very small. The critical element was not large. The scientific pretension was modest. A theological air pervaded the scheme, but it was hardly distinct enough to satisfy a strict theologian. The conception of Christ was always nebulous, like a sunny cloud. Thought was immersed in feeling. To call the Creed sentimental would be doing it an injustice. It was spiritual, rather, "dark from excessive bright." The following letters to Theodore Parker and James Perkins will perhaps explain it:—

NASHUA, *June 9, 1842.*

DEAR FRIEND, — I have read twice and with care your volume [the "Discourse"] and feel that I am doing a plain duty, as well as giving myself a pleasure, in thanking you for it. It is the work best worth reading on religion that I have seen among us. It far surpasses, in every way, my expectations; and I anticipate from many of its suggestions rich veins of thought not yet explored by me. It would take more space and time than you or I should give to the matter to tell all the modifications of opinion or of statement which I should have felt inclined to make; and the only result of such a discussion would be, what is already self-evident, that no two minds can see truth under the same aspect. In all essentials I agree with you entirely. . . . A radical defect I think there is, which I would, with some diffidence, ask you to examine, and see

whether it does not run through the book, and really give it apparently a different character from that which it has in your own mind, and which you intended it should have to others. In a word, it seems to me that you have nowhere in the volume done justice to one conviction, which I presume you to hold, of course. It is this : " That the Race is inspired as well as the Individual ; that Humanity is a growth from a Divine Life as well as Man ; and indeed that the true advancement of the individual is dependent upon the advancement of a generation, and that the law of this is providential, the direct act of the Being of beings." This is one of my deepest convictions, and is indeed the ground of my Christian faith and my reconciliation with the Church. I have always held it ; but during the last year, especially, it has assumed great prominence in my mind, and made me tolerate all the garrulity and triviality of Leroux, in consideration of the expression, however cloudy, which he has given to this great truth. Now though you speak of the religious advancement of mankind from fetishism to spirituality, I ask whether you do give anything like the proper emphasis to the assertion that this advancement is an inspiration and a Divine Life. Your statement savors too much, to my mind, of Naturalism, throughout, though this is wholly inconsistent, to be sure, with the fundamental root of the whole book, which is faith in the inspiration of the individual soul. The race is to me a revelation of God more than any one man is, more than all separate men are. It is my theory — though it is granted that a mere enunciation of it does not demonstrate its truth — that not only all races, but all the myriads of men who have lived, and are living, or yet to live, are needed to express God's idea of man. Hence the shading which separates characters, and the formation which wide popular common sense, and yet more the direction which the impulsive enthusiasm of whole nations and ages, give to opinion and conduct, are sacred to me. The past justifies

itself and explains itself in the present, and a perfected race alone will give adequate utterance to the "Word of God." The race is a Church, whose chapels are ages, whose priests whole nations, with separate men for sacred symbols. The central position of the Syrian Race and the flowering of this life in Jesus and the Christian Church has then to me a holy charm beyond that which is described by saying that the prophets and Jesus were individually inspired men. Jesus could never have been what he was but for the accumulated river of life, which through the steep precipices of Jewish bigotry poured itself into his broad and generous nature. So the faith of the Christian Church in a God-man is more to me than a monster born of heathenism and Judaism. It is prophetic, though tinged with the hard and steely hues of Jewish asceticism. If I believe in the inspiration of the race and of individuals, this word, God-man, is more expressive of my true destiny and aim than any other I can conceive. I justify then the Church, and from the table-land of the nineteenth century I look back and explain the toilsome progress of man, while seeing on the summits far above the golden walls of the temple where God is the sun. Perhaps my view is enthusiastic; I suppose it is my tendency to be so. But I feel at present that I occupy a vantage-ground which in your mode of statement you do not assume, and yet which completes and establishes all your positions. I need say no more. You will see at once the bearing of this criticism. Is it just?

I have very much that I want to talk to you about. Amongst other things it seems to me that a time has come for strenuous and determined action. I did wrong in not obeying the spirit at the very opening of the talk at the Odeon. I could then have had full swing instead of waving only the hem of a garment, as I did, while the air too was full of the golden dust you had scattered. But why not take advantage of the meeting of the alumni in July? I will tell you in a word what I want, and what I think the

age calls for. It is the establishment of "an order of the Sons of God." I wish no direct severance from the Unitarians, but a completion of that movement; and why not by one dead lift raise up the good laggards to the broad ground of a living faith in a Heavenly Father? This is my hope. It is all waste to be beating the air with a revival, where, though the sailing arms of the mill go round, and the stones creak loudly as they grind, there is nothing between them but the old husks whose flour has long since been made into bread and eaten. There is a noble band all ready. Are not all the best hearts and minds with us? I wish no party, no dead association, no fuss and noise. But at present the living men stand alone; and, as in fettered limbs, the blood creeps but slowly from the heart to the extremities and back again. Say, then, what think you of a little moral galvanism? Can we not bring our zinc and copper (brass, if you will) plates together, and, under the influence of a little acidulated conservatism, send forth a spark which shall wake the sleepers, if not stir the dead? I will tell you more of this if you are favorably disposed: and if you are, we must write to certain men, and make sure of their being at the meeting. Or is it premature and useless? It does seem to me there is a crying void, and I can hear the waters of the great ocean, hissing and murmuring to break in and fill it with a glorious life. God bless you, dear friend, and give you wisdom and power to do his work.

W. H. C.

P. S. — This letter has been accidentally delayed, and I open it to say all this is too enthusiastic. We must possess our souls in patience, prophesying merely of the good time to come, and doing meanwhile what little we can. Let us unite with the Unitarians; they may do much.

CAMBRIDGE, *January* 18, 1842.

DEAR JAMES, — I write partly to gain some information about you all, for not a word has any one favored me with

since September; partly also to state to you the views to which a renewed study of the Christian religion has brought me. For I know that these will have some interest for you even if you dissent from them. I will state my present faith positively, as the briefest way of opening my mind to you. You will see that the same convictions which last spring led me to reject opinions commonly held have, when more profoundly considered, brought me again into sympathy with them, though the point of view from which I regard them and my manner of explaining them may be peculiar. First, my fundamental conviction is that God, as the only self-existent and all perfect, is the source of all that is, and therefore of all goodness, wisdom, beauty, energy, and peace in human souls. In these He especially manifests himself, and a holy and devoted will is the highest and most glorious expression of his perfection upon earth. All wills, however, in their degree declare Him, and the whole human race, therefore, the fate of nations, the lives of individuals, are his own unfolding revelation. All virtue and science and art and success and happiness have been from Him, and taken together they announce his will for man. Through all ages and people his grand design has been, is, and will be unfolding, till man is perfected. Second, it follows from this that all events in the past, all influences which have been exerted, all causes which have coöperated to produce the present condition of the human race, have been from God, and have had his sanction, and are revelations of his will in proportion to their degree of importance. Third, it is a plain matter of fact that religion and morality are man's highest interest, and equally plain that the highest manifestation of these in ancient times was given through the Jewish nation in ever-increasing brightness, until the revelation through that people reached its perfect consummation in him who came, fulfilling their highest hope in the fullness of time. Then was Moses a special agent of God : God's spirit moved him,

spoke in him; his agency coöperated with him; a grand providence raised him up and carried him on, which is proved by the greatness of the truths he taught, and the importance of the influence he has exerted. So with the prophets: their devout hopes, their sublime morality, their confident expectation of a perfect holiness, in time to be manifested, were of God, — God's inspiration. And intellectual errors as to the time, character, and mode of this grand reform, amid great weakness of national and individual character spoke out this clear voice, announcing a higher spiritual good. And when all was ripe, when the nation was utterly crushed, and every mother's heart was full of longing for the deliverer, came one, fitted to be one in a holy and a loving will with God. Jesus was exactly what he said he was, — the Son of Man, the Son of God, a human soul, filled with the Father, a great light, a way, a truth, a saviour from sin, the opener of a new era in the history of man, the era of a spiritual faith and a perfect charity. And how remarkable was this fullness of time! — nations broken, religions overturned, philosophies in countless numbers and variety mingled together, customs changed by such repeated waves of foreign conquest, the whole habitable world almost united for the first time under the sway of one empire, just tottering to its fall, and in the background hordes of savage nations rising from their long torpor and slowly preparing to overthrow the old forms of civilization. What a series of events conspiring to this one end of opening a new moral world! And what a wonderful symbol in his whole life was Jesus of this new era, which the events of eighteen hundred years have proved was then beginning to unfold! Born in a manger, the son of a peasant, bred to toil, living among the common people, the servant of men, devoted to self-sacrifice, consecrated to kindness, dying in love, — how does he seem to typify the age of which even we see only the morning, the age of men living like the children of

one Heavenly Father! Look still higher from his circumstances to his character, from his acts to his spirit, and how he fulfills the highest hopes of the highest minds of his age; how he transcends even our present ideal in the depth and delicacy, the purity and largeness, of his love. He was all that he said, and more. For necessarily he spoke in Jewish phraseology, perhaps with Jewish associations. But the spirit that was in him was the Spirit of the Father announcing the salvation of man from sin and selfishness, prophesying of the age of peace and joy and spirituality. What wonder that such a love should have been of such victorious and surpassing power! When I look at the love which shines through the miracles of Jesus, I see their propriety and naturalness. They belong to him, and are in perfect harmony with the whole life. Are they not, too, prophetic, as his whole life was, of what man shall one day be capable, when this grand spiritual reform is complete? The resurrection seems to be the fit and natural termination of this appearance upon earth of a spirit wholly one with the divine spirit. It was the sign of love, the proof of a deep interest in man which death could not change, of an everlasting affection in him who was received into the bosom of the Father. Yes, this is the Christian era! and Jesus is the corner-stone of the Temple of Liberty and Love, for which men are in all lands gathering the materials and commencing to build. Modern history is the unending witness to the divine origin of the Christian religion, and the true work of our day is to be filled with this spirit of love, and to spread it. Many of these views I have always held and taught, but I am reconciled now to the whole. I feel as I never did before the sublime life of Providence which through all ages sways and moulds men to the completion of its grand design of humanity.

Yours, ever,

W. H. C.

It will be seen that the new faith was a transfiguration of the old one, and a fore-gleam of what was to

come. The New Testament was interpreted in a poetical sense. A vigorous criticism pronounced on the Old Testament, putting an inner spiritual meaning into ordinary sentences. It was his way to take all men and literatures at the best, and to sublimate as symbols what could not be received literally. With him, too, moral influence superseded everything. He was, essentially, a preacher, and had in view immediate effects which depended on a broad, free treatment of doctrines. Not that he studied impressions, but he aimed at enforcing truths as well as stating them.

It will be observed that one of the foregoing letters is written from Nashua. He went there in the spring to stay during the months of summer. Of this ministry there is no record. It seems to have made but little mark on his mind, probably because it occurred at this critical hour of his inward experience, when few incidents could make an impression. That he was active may be taken for granted. That he greatly interested individuals may be assumed. He always did, even if he delivered but a single address and exerted no personal attraction. The extracts from letters to Margaret Fuller are interesting in this connection. His friendly intimacy with her began, he tells us, in the summer of 1839, while she was residing at Jamaica Plain, though he had for several years been acquainted with her. They talked together on literary and philosophical subjects with entire sincerity and confidence, and to their mutual benefit. The directness of their intercourse would be remarkable in ordinary cases, but it was characteristic of them, for both he and she were singularly earnest, outspoken people, and demanded utter truthfulness from their friends. Each highly valued the other.

He suggested to her a plan for a novel, of which the subject should be the growth of her own mind, saying in his letter : —

I have felt all along that I was the one to be aided in our intercourse. And I feel, too, though you may be slow to credit it, that I have been. For sincerely, I do think you have done more to unfold my buried nature than any friend. . . . You shall write nobler books than ever George Sand could conceive.

And she was able to write to him in the following strain : —

I wish I could hear you speak at the same time with Waldo, for it would be beautiful to me to see my two friends thus brought near to one another upon a common platform ; but for this, I should have no wish to be at Concord now. For as the full soul loathes the honeycomb, so is it with me as to popular excitements, even on great and vital subjects, when my longing is for the deep places of silent thought, where alone I am perfected. I felt content to see you go after our meeting the other day, while I remain without one of my kind to whom I can speak a free word. Sometimes such loneliness seems desolate, but I rejoice to feel that you are now upon your chosen path ; and so farewell, and may the good Spirit guide you. Of your own future it seems I might yet have some clear word to say. . . . You know my confidence in your powers ; daily you have my prayers for your success. Persevere, my dear brother, and be forever happy.

On March 9, 1849, in a letter from Rome to Mr. Marcus Spring, she said : —

What would I not give that my other two brothers, R. W. E. and W. H. C., could see him [Mazzini] ! All have in different ways the celestial fire, all have pure natures. They may have faults, but no base alloy. To me they form a triad. I know none other such.

Well might he term this his title of nobility, esteeming it to be "a crown of honor worth years of seeming failure, popular misconception, pity of friends." Here are the earlier fragments.

NASHUA, *June 11, 1842.*

I write to Canton, as you request, dear Margaret, and will open with a sketch of my habitation. I am sitting in my parlor, which has a west and southwest outlook, giving us an open sky for all the sunset glories through four windows. The walls, unpapered, are hung with my engravings. Over the mantel-piece is the Dresden Madonna. On the north wall hang in the centre a group of five pictures arranged in the shape of a cross: the nave being the St. John of Domenichino, Guercino's Mother and Child, and Raphael's head of himself; the transept, Domenichino's and Guercino's Sibyls. As the Mother and Child is a circular picture, the effect of this cross is very pleasing to the eye. Flanking this central group is, on the left Claude's Temple of Delphi, and on the right the Flight into Egypt, also by Claude. On the east wall hangs in the centre Michael Angelo's Cumæan Sibyl, a most noble engraving, and above it the Zacharias, on the left the School of Athens, on the right the Deliverance of Peter. Beyond the door, on this wall, hangs the Night of Correggio, — the Nativity, that is to say. On the south wall hangs the Ascension of Guido, and under it the Madonna of the Chair. In a little space, by the side of the window, is a Mater Pietatis of Andrea del Sarto. Add a checked-matting carpet, some simple furniture, and a few vases, etc., on the chimney-piece, and you have my pleasant little parlor. Behind this parlor is a dining-room, and opposite to it another room which we use as a chamber. Above are four rooms, the back one of which, on the N. W., is my study, having a pleasant view from the west window. The north one looks upon my garden and stable. And now, coming out from the house, you see a front yard some sixty feet

deep, with a terrace, flower-beds, rose-bushes, a few shrubs, and rather ragged grass. Please walk now to the left, round the house, up this slight ascent. Cast your eye upon the nice well, so deep and cool, under a roof, and on my symmetric wood-pile and neat stable; and here is my garden, boasting of only one apple-tree. It is not wholly regular in shape, you see, but larger even than I need. Here are my melon beds, just beginning to sprout. Here a border of tomatoes and lettuce, there beds of beets, carrots, salsify, and turnips. On the other side of the path, corn, beans, peas. Then again squashes and cucumbers, and some sixty hills of potatoes complete the catalogue. So I am very comfortably off, you see. As to scenery, we care but little for the luxuries, and find these pine woods and plain rolling hillocks a repose. The people seem an earnest, sensible, hard-working, thriving folk, ready to learn, impressible and free; and I plainly feel that I am doing them good. My little boy just walks alone. His passion for me is very affecting. And I tell you frankly, if I can judge from physiognomy, phrenology, look, action, and instinctive judgment, surer than all, he is one of the grand ones. My best hope is crowned in him thus far. Fanny, too, is full of intelligence and life. . . .

NASHUA, *July 7, 1842.*

DEAR MARGARET, — Your dove flew into my window yesterday, and to-day I send it back, with the words that your friend is well in body and spirit, and hopes to see you next week. . . .

I like the "Dial" much. How exquisitely graceful Emerson is! what a fineness of touch about all he does, and such a genuine appreciation of everything! I liked his lecture when I heard it, but I had no idea how full it was of manly good sense and humanity and large wisdom. He is dreadfully keen. There are words that go sheer to the very gun-room, blowing up all before them. And the beautiful religion of it all, too. Well! I thank Heaven I was born in

the same day with him. He has but begun his career. The growth of my honor for him I can count by the hours. This summer, especially, it has shot up like corn after showers. I have no words select enough to symbolize my sense of the delicate, clean-cut, medallion-like nakedness of his poetry. It is quite unique. I was much struck to observe, in reading the extract from Milton in connection with the preceding and succeeding passages of the lecture, how the thoughts and style seemed of one clan, and clad in the same tartan. . . .

Ellery's verses show the same acute perception in his epithets, descriptive touches, and sometimes movement of the verse that we have always seen in him. . . .

You are gaining at length, it seems to me, the kind of free, simple, pointed, manly expression which you desire; and how close and comprehensive your observation is! But I feel always that the novel would be your true vehicle. To bring out your thought, you need just that variety of character which is always in your mind, but which the essay does not allow. By and by, friend C——, shall the longing of your soul be satisfied, to be one with the Infinite Nature; but meanwhile, serve out your novitiate of humanity. Society is the condition of all sound moral circulation. Plants may breathe oxygen; man wastes on such stimulus. "Dolon" is full to crowding with truth and beauty, but alas! it has no key-note for earthly instruments. It is a song made for heaven's harps, sung to the spinet of earth."

In the autumn of 1842, Mr. Channing went to Brooklyn, N. Y. Here he held meetings on Sunday afternoons, in a school-house, where he addressed a small company of malcontents with the stated services of the churches. At first a pulpit was provided, but was occupied one or two Sundays only, and then was taken away, as he preferred to stand on a level with the people. So great was his dislike of clerical assumption, so strong was his belief in general inspira-

tion, that he invited discussion, and it was customary for the congregation to follow his address with a free debate, in which there was a full expression of opinion in regard to the special theme of the discourse. The deliverance was indeed frank and free, more so than was altogether pleasant, there being representatives of every shade of belief or unbelief. The preacher's faith in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man was so sublime, he worked so hard and prayed so devoutly for the coming of the kingdom of heaven upon earth, that he was a bond of unity, keeping the divergent elements in peace. In small matters, as in great, his faithfulness was extraordinary. His kindness, helpfulness, tenderness, were untiring. He was especially fond of children, winning them by his sympathetic gentleness. He remained but a few months in Brooklyn. A larger promise drew him to New York, and the ministry continued in the Stuyvesant Institute on Broadway. There Horace Greeley, Henry James, and other noted men were in frequent attendance.

After a few months, the room in the Stuyvesant Institute was left for a hall in Crosby Street. It was small and plain. The preacher stood before the little desk, with the lofty, inspired manner so peculiar to him, and greeted with a smile his friends as they came, as he did also the flowers which loving hands always placed on the stand. He was a flame, a breath of mountain air, a pure breeze from the north. He lifted up drooping hearts. Daily life became richer for his elevated teaching. His words were full of immortality. Cheerfulness and peace went with him, with the thought of him. He was a power of love, a radiant presence in all homes, a real blessing in homes where he was familiar.

The "Principles of Christian Union" were submitted to the society on the 9th of April, 1843. A certain amount of vagueness was deemed necessary at first, in order to allow proper emphasis to a few leading ideas, which were thrown conspicuously forward, and made to shine as brightly as possible. The organization was called "Christian" as indicating belief in Jesus Christ, the Saviour and the Anointed of God. A discussion followed the discourse, implying faith in the living inspiration of the human soul. The spirit of these services cannot be given without printing some extracts from the "Principles."

The spirit of reform which is animating the hearts of men in this generation, of every class, radical and conservative, through church and state, with a greater hope than the world has ever known, prompts a threefold movement against three classes of prevailing evils. First, the contrasts in condition, intelligence, and character, which are produced by our modes of domestic, industrial, and social life, are felt to be at utter variance with our faith as Christians and as men. Professedly, we believe that all are born to be children of God, to grow up in love and truth and joy, to enter upon a spiritual existence, to be united as brethren by interchange of blessings received from one Father; practically, we are separated into castes, reared upon accidents, upheld by caprice, mutually jealous of each other's encroachments, and tenacious of conflicting rights. Excessive wealth, exclusively possessed, is side by side with abject want; leisure that breeds frivolity, with exhausting toils; incitements to intellectual culture, with necessities which fetter the noblest powers; influences well fitted to refine and purify, with degrading relations exhaling an atmosphere of vice. Masses are crowded into narrow places, foul airs, and situations engendering disease. Society expends in the punishment of criminals sums which, justly

shared and wisely used, would have insured the virtue of these victims of neglect. . . . But a great change is spreading over men's spirits. Disgust is becoming general at this jargon of barren polemics. The multiplicity of opinions which first drove men into an extreme freedom of inquiry has resulted at length in mutual deference and respect for the combined judgments of the race. It is seen that no man, that no age, can know the whole of truth, but only such of its phases as their peculiar character fits them to perceive, and that in the constantly unfolding wisdom of mankind alone is there any approximation to infallibility. The era of denial and scoffing has passed; we long for affirmations; there is a new confidence in the universal presence of the spirit of truth. We begin to perceive that through all varieties of creeds, through the thousand-fold forms of mythology and theology, through the systems of philosophers and the visions of poets, has spoken more or less audibly one Eternal Word. . . . Many of the most devout have withdrawn from our churches, and are watching in secret for the dayspring. It is felt that rituals have too commonly been substituted for rectitude; that consecrated places have too often been considered as fitter temples for the Omnipresent than humble hearts and societies sanctified by love; that the ministry of truth, the offices of kindness, the expressions of reverence, which God gives in commission to every sincere soul, have been too much delegated to the select few. Unnatural mystery has been thrown around the most vital and universal experience of life; forms have choked the spontaneous aspiration after that peace which comes in wills made one with God; asceticism sacrificing natural feeling, and longing for futurity, have been thought more spiritual than thankful joy in present blessings; fear has cast gloom over the confidence which a creature should repose in divine benignity, until the very influence most fitted to purify and expand affection and set free every power has been turned to an instrument of

constraint, and character has been dwarfed when it should have been perfected. But the Spirit of Christ, animating the hearts of his true followers and friends in all ages of the Church, makes itself more and more distinctly known. The divinity which filled and transfigured Jesus, till it made him "the brightness of God's glory and the express image of his person," reveals itself as that inspiration of goodness which visits all who are pure in heart. He was one with Him whose name is Love, through his own devoted love. And his disinterestedness, by the sympathy it awakens, brings ever nearer the fulfillment of his prayer, "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, may they be one in us." Throughout the Church and society is working a sublime hope of an era near at hand, when men shall receive and diffuse in healthy bodies, warm affections, simple thoughts, glad tempers, and efficient deeds, a heavenly life; and when justice, guided by eternal models, shall build a beautiful temple of order, where the whole of life may be worship. . . . Meanwhile, it is sufficient joy, in this morning of a new day, to do the work appointed now. What is this work? Undoubtedly it is, first of all, to be individually faithful to our highest conviction in our several spheres. Undoubtedly, too, to different minds is assigned a different duty. True men are fellow-laborers, wherever and however occupied. But has not the past taught the insufficiency of individual exertion? If the eternal law of creation is unity in variety; if the human race is one in many, with one modified life flowing through all; if the Infinite Spirit communicates influences to every soul in proportion to its power and fidelity, — then may we be sure that God reveals himself most fully where men are bound together in mutual sympathy and respect, in justice, truth, and love, in common joy. We live in the lives of our brethren. We need the incitement which comes from communion with our fellow-beings to perfect ourselves and fulfill our destiny. An atmosphere of many minds reflects the radiance from the

Only Good in the daylight of a common sense and the genial warmth of a common conscience. The peculiar work of the present moment, it appears to us, is union, — the union of those interested in either of the three great reforms we have mentioned, in a oneness of feeling, thought, and action. Union will give to these divided energies method, earnestness, wisdom, consistency; and hasten the fulfillment of that great hope which makes these threefold tendencies but one, the hope of heaven on earth. . . . We wish, then, to form a union of fellow-seekers after a higher holiness, wisdom, and humanity. We see that the three great reforms which animate this generation are essentially one; we hear a heavenly promise in this threefold revival of hope; we desire the fullness of this inspiration; we would do the present will of Providence; we need more life, more light, more love; we would have our affections, thoughts, and acts pervaded by a divine power of growth; in the inmost soul would we be quickened by this piety, large as our nature, universal as our relations, which begins to speak as with authority, encouraging man to seek a perfect oneness with God; we would have our superficiality and prejudices, our cant and sophisms, dispelled by the truth which a profounder faith and more reverent science are striving to teach; and from the promptings and guidance of deep devoutness and a large intelligence, would we go forth to labor amidst the crowds of hopeful and earnest souls, who are striving to introduce the law which is liberty, the order which is peace, the reign of right.

Individually, we find ourselves subject to partialities in attempting to solve the problems opened before us; sincere brethren aid us to fulfill our ideal; and therefore would we unite, in confidence that where two or three are met together in the name of God, He will be with them. We meet on the common ground of our common spiritual nature, relations, and destiny. We have no creed; for though we see all around us tendencies to universal truth, we do

not adopt any one system as an adequate and full statement. We are learners, not teachers ; we set up no limits, and cordially invite all to join us who have affinity for our principles. Our movement is one of reunion, not of schism ; of building up, and not of pulling down ; of growth, and not of destruction. We wish not to form a sect, but to do something to show that the day when sectarianism may have been necessary is passing by ; and that the time has come for the recognition of that essential "way and truth and life" which gives to existing organizations whatever vitality they have. We know very well that such an attempt as this must necessarily be vague in character, but the very confession that we are seeking what we have not found, that we are waiting for a future which, from the past through the present, is tending to fulfillment, is the life of our movement. At the best it will be a mere approximation ; a faint foreshadow of that true union which soon shall appear. But we have full conviction that the church universal is about to assume a new and glorious form, — a form which will realize the promise, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men ; and He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God." We call ourselves the Christian Union, not because we believe that Jesus Christ wished or purposed to give his name to the worshipers of "his Father and of our Father, of his God and of our God," for he called his disciples friends, they called each other brethren ; nor because we claim any peculiar fullness of that Holy Spirit by which he was sanctified, for we believe that this Spirit has dwelt, and still dwells, in men of every tongue and nation ; nor because we wish to band ourselves upon the popular side, for when we see that armies fight and tyrants rule, that oppressors triumph, and statesmen lie, and traders cheat, and civilization robs, pollutes, and murders the barbarism which it professes to evangelize, though all are christened and all wear the symbol of the cross, we

think the prophet of Nazareth would feel outraged, not honored, by this homage to his name from those who spurn his spirit. We adopt the title Christian because we reverently acknowledge Jesus the Christ as a Saviour from sin and an anointed messenger of God ; because we gratefully own that his life has been the germ of that holy and hopeful humanity which, gradually unfolding through modern times, has grown to be the tree of life in a recovered Eden ; because we believe that it is the purpose of God, through this High Priest, to gather into one temple, around one altar, his wide-scattered children ; because, finally, we are bound in deed and in truth to hold out the right hand of fellowship to all who, under this world-wide name, are seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Our religious meetings are of three kinds, two being held on Sunday, and one on some evening in the week. One of the Sunday meetings is under the guidance of a leader, appointed for such a time as may seem best for the interests of the society. In transition from existing customs, and from respect for what may prove to be the permanent office of instruction, we select thus a friend to communicate the matured fruits of his spiritual experience, and to give that direction to devout feeling which may seem best to his conscience and judgment. We recognize, however, no peculiar priesthood set apart by human ordination for official ministrations. On the contrary, we believe that the only true priesthood is the innumerable company of earnest, upright, loving souls, whom God forever consecrates anew with the anointing of goodness ; and we hold that all pure and sincere persons are free to discharge every sacred rite to which they may feel prompted, or which others may request at their hands. We wish to see a holy nation, a people of priests.

Mr. William C. Russel was secretary. Among the members were Christopher P. Cranch and his wife,

who took great satisfaction in his services. The preaching was earnest, and in times of political excitement, as at the period of the Texas annexation, almost painfully intense. The assertion of the claims of the Higher Law was absolute, and the rebuke of all sentiments inconsistent with liberty quick and sharp. When, in 1850, Daniel Webster advised the return of fugitive slaves, the language was as strong as a gentleman's use of English speech permitted. Mr. Channing was a reformer as well as a prophet and saint, a painter as well as a scholar, a hero no less than a gentleman, noble and elegant. All the other preaching in New York was tame in comparison with his. There was no minister like him. He was never idle, never self-indulgent. His interest in the cultivated classes was no greater than his interest in the poor, whose ignorance, disability, wretchedness, he deplored. He was a sort of St. Francis, only he did not waste his eloquence on birds and fishes.

Among the pleasant episodes of his stay in New York was the renewal of his personal intercourse with Margaret Fuller, who was residing with Horace Greeley on the East River, as literary critic and philanthropic correspondent of the "Tribune." Channing escorted her to the spots where poverty, vice, and crime could best be studied. Under his guidance she visited the Five Points, Blackwell's Island, the prison at Sing Sing, with all which he was quite familiar. Together they listened to music. She visited his home, and charmed the whole family by the sweetness of her disposition, the brilliancy of her conversation, and her devotion to the children, who were very fond of her, for they seldom found any one so willing to take pains for them. She heard him preach, and was

moved by his speech to write to him in the following strain: "I felt that you had learned much of your own heart and life through my friendly sympathy. May our Father lead you to your true home. He will infuse a glow of fervent light and steadfastness." The last clause is perhaps an allusion to something she had said in a letter three months before, December 4, 1844: "I shall venture to counsel when plain matters of fact are before us, though my real confidence must be in a ceaseless prayer that your enthusiasm may be tempered to a steady and milder glow, though perhaps never subdued." Much has been told regarding her remarkable address to the abandoned women at Sing Sing, but his was no less lovely, though not so unusual, inasmuch as he had frequent occasion to present hope to the despondent and guilty.

His concern about the condition of the classes lowest in privilege and opportunity, always deep, was on the increase. He felt that his message was ultimately to them. He believed in their spiritual susceptibility, and if the soul was dormant it was his business to wake it up. A conviction of this sort led to the abandonment of his ministry in New York, as appears from a letter which Miss E. P. Peabody sent to her friend Miss Parsons in the autumn of 1845. Another letter told of his plan to preach at West Roxbury when Mr. Parker was called to Boston, in 1845. The letters of Mr. Atkinson are all that is left to describe a short but significant ministry in the summer of 1846, when Mr. Channing was at Brook Farm. The ministry was terminated suddenly by the active agency of a few, but it could not have lasted long, owing to the decrease of the community and the opening of other fields of labor.

RHINEBECK, *September 16.*

. . . I should be glad to impart to you, dear A——, the spiritual characteristics of those two hours. There were but few persons present, for the society at best is small, and the rain prevented a large part of it from coming. William read from the Scriptures, and then they sang a hymn. He then commenced his discourse by the expression of a hope that the months of parting had been to them, as they had been to him, a period of unequaled peace and joy, and he proceeded to describe them, in simple, unexcited words, full of feeling, as growing out of his increasing insight into the operations of God's love and justice and actual presence, ordering and harmonizing all things. The form of thought was not new, but the spiritual reality of it in his case was full, and seemed to flow over and surround one, as the soft, rich, flute-like music of his voice pervaded the atmosphere. He then went on to discourse upon man and wherein humanity became humanity; how the form man became the being man, and this was by its being receptive of the superhuman. The sermon was long, but to me very satisfactory. The doctrine was essentially different from Parker's. The superhuman was objective in his view, and the fact of a complete incarnation of it in Jesus Christ was clearly stated. He did not go into any detail where any difference between us may be, and my personal affection for him is so great that it overpowered every other consideration, and I enjoy to the greatest degree of fullness the conviction that he has the fact of eternal life even as a doctrine. Perhaps there may be a providence in his not seeing it as I do in certain symbols, for if he did he could use no other, and thus might not gain access to some minds which he is to carry along. He spoke of the Unity of Life, and the fact that our own partakes of the particular race to which we belong, and which is pure or impure, an advantage or the contrary, according to the fidelity of each individual progenitor; also that our life partakes of the national life; and lastly that it was characterized by our per-

sonal fidelity to the superhuman which Jesus manifested to our mind, and God overflows us withal. Under the head of national life he spoke noble and great words upon the deed of the past year, — words of thrilling pathos upon the disappointment and dismay of the friends of liberty in Europe; but rebuke, disappointment, humiliation, indignation, though all expressed as felt most deeply, did not drown the expression of faith, calm, full, bright, at once pious and humane, that flowed like a soft, sweet, rich tropic moonlight over all. He closed his sermon with a prayer, dismissed with an apostolic benediction. I think this was the order, and then he rose again and said, "Friends, I have three propositions to make to you, to which I would say some words of preface." He then spoke of their knowledge of the hope for humanity which he deemed to be vested in association, and the feeling which he had long had that he must personally do something in this movement, when a time should come that his personal service should work into play. He believed that time had come, and his friends at Brook Farm believed that he could be of service. He said a good deal more, in which he expressed no extravagant expectations of immediate or even final success, but anxiety that every exertion should be made that Brook Farm might redeem the pledge it had given of making an amended society within its own borders. He spoke of his relation to the society he was addressing, his satisfaction with the nature of his relations with it; he gently alluded to their rational, high-charactered, tender, and mutually respectful friendship, and declared that there was no relation of pastor and people, from one end of the land to the other, which he would exchange for his, and yet he proposed that here to-day they should part, and the relation between them should be dissolved. He then presented his propositions: one was, that they should keep up their society themselves, and let him go till the middle of December, when he should have finished the work in which

he is engaged, and have had time to take a deeper observation of the possibilities of duty at Brook Farm; another was, that they should invite some one else regularly to minister to them, or make some plan to keep up the society themselves until spring, when he should have had still more time to observe; and thirdly, that unconditionally they should entirely separate that day giving to each other a full and affectionate "God speed." There was no sentimental expression in all this, but the manner was simple, sweet, grave, and with an air as if neither party could misunderstand the other's deep affection and complete fidelity to the most unselfish principle. He ended, and leaving the pulpit went and sat down. A dead silence followed for some moments, and then the gentlemen gathered together in groups and conversed low. Several came to William, and without one word of sentimentality, but with the most feeling manner, said, "Which of these three propositions would you prefer us to choose?" William said he did not like to feel that the meeting would be broken up (I sat near them, and so heard this low conversation). The general feeling expressed was that the public meeting would not be kept up, but that they might meet at each other's houses. At last Mr. Greeley rose, and moved that Mr. Channing be set free unconditionally, with this condition only, that if ever at any time he should wish to resume this or any other relation with them, he should make it known to their secretary. He thought it would be impossible to keep up the public meetings; a social meeting would succeed better, if private; and as to having another preacher, he thought they would henceforth be fastidious in preaching. To these words the whole assembly made a low response of *yes*, with a little laugh. Mr. Hopper seconded Mr. Greeley's motion, saying that he wished Mr. Channing might be requested to come back the first Sunday in January, and tell them his experiences. Another person said he thought Mr. Channing would be able much

more effectively to speak for the association than if not personally connected with it, and that to have him come four times in the year and speak publicly he might do even more than now speaking every Sunday. But it was concluded to accept Mr. Greeley's motion separately, and to consider other plans afterwards.

October, 4, 1845.

MY DEAR ANNA, — I remember that Tuesday morning in which I wrote you I did feel surprised at my own want of animation, but was inclined to attribute it partly to my quiet satisfaction in William Channing's conversation on Monday, which made me feel as if we had communion beyond the reach of words. I admire and enjoy the spiritual character of William's project of identifying his name with P——, in the pulpit, and yet I regret that it should be so, since he really differs essentially in views, and is of a much higher spiritual character than P——. I can trust William to his future with more satisfaction, hope, and joy than I can P——, who, while he knows far less than William of the doctrine of life, is far less docile, and more the slave of his own instinctive character. I feel that perils and snares beset them both around, but that P—— is less aware of, and so less secure from, "the traitor in the heart." But William will do good there, perhaps, as he could not were he to minister to the world. The world is too unearnest to understand William. These people at West Roxbury, in and around Brook Farm, are full of errors, — in great danger from "the traitor in the heart," — but they are not frivolous, and their eyes are open to such spiritual beauty as clothes William Channing as with a garment. I feel that William is the Lord's beloved, and "the Lord leadeth his beloved in a way they know not."

Yours, very truly,

E. P. PEABODY.

Thus closed the year 1845. A few months, early in 1846, he preached at West Roxbury in the pulpit of

Theodore Parker, whose installation in Boston took place on January 4th. The letters that ensue tell the results of that brief ministry:—

WEST ROXBURY, *May 11, 1846.*

DEAR SIR, — The undersigned, a portion of your West Roxbury audience, cannot allow you to leave us without expressing to you the deep interest we have felt in your preaching. We would not pay you an ordinary compliment for an ordinary service, but we feel that you have done us no common good. You have spoken with power to what is deepest and best within us, and we trust that the truths you have uttered in our ears we shall not soon or willingly let go. We cannot but express our deep regret at so soon losing what we have felt to be so great a good, and in taking leave of you we can only hope that your departure will be for the benefit of your health and the prolonging of these labors we have had the opportunity to estimate so highly. Accept, dear sir, our best wishes, and believe us, with the highest respect and esteem,

(Signed)

Your Friends.

WEST ROXBURY, *May 19, 1846.*

DEAR FRIEND, — The inclosed letter is not, as it says for itself, a mere ordinary compliment. Its signers, with very few exceptions, have felt an extraordinary interest in your preaching, and I think on many of them you have produced a deep impression. Nearly all who signed it are very anxious to hear you again, and very indignant at the result of the last parish meeting. If the matter had been more clearly understood, and the proposal to invite you to preach been distinctly separated from that of holding but one service, and particularly if it had been more clearly understood that your stay would be likely to be as permanent as that of most other candidates, there would have been a decisive vote to invite you. As it is, I think that,

whenever another parish meeting shall be called, there will be found a very large majority in your favor, should you still be inclined to come. It is the general feeling that it will be better to let B—— have his way for a short time, and then to call a meeting which shall express the real feeling of the parish. I make these explanations because I think you may be in error in respect to the true feeling of your hearers. Mr. P——'s preaching has not been so utterly in vain as the result of the last meeting would seem to indicate. I think your audience here was far better able to understand and appreciate your word to them than the majority of such audiences would be, nor do I think it possible for any effort to succeed in settling a minister here who is not on the side of humanity and progress.

I wish you were where I could know you more intimately, and I shall not yet give up the hope. Meantime, believe me, with the truest regard, your friend,

W. P. ATKINSON.

The sudden cessation of the West Roxbury term of service must have been a disappointment, but there is no trace of it or of any sentiment but that of gratitude for the measure of favor that was extended to him. That his soul was rapt in the vision of a new earth, which he was intent on forming to the extent of his own ability, is evident from a letter which George William Curtis wrote to Mrs. Hoxie, a devoted champion of association, on June 2, 1846: —

In the evening, at the Fourier Convention, William Channing and Adin Ballou were very eloquent. William streamed like a fount of fire, stood as graceful as an angel, with the flaming sword, and seemed so real that everybody who spoke, except Mr. Ballou, dwindled entirely away. At the Antislavery Convention, William Channing was more noble than I have ever seen him. Faneuil Hall was full of men and women, and I was glad to see the majority of

men. He stood visible his whole length upon the platform, and there with his burning outward fervor and his inward beautiful serenity, he counseled entire abstinence from war in every way. He was violently hissed and applauded. The hissing harmed him, as a man met with a want of sympathy by his fellows, as the first angry hiss of the snake might have sounded in Paradise; for his mind is a celestial garden, where men stand as they are, in their real beauty, without the mask of sin. He addressed himself to the hissers, and said, "It is foolish to hiss a man who has made up his mind on these great questions, after long consideration and counting of the cost. Yet brothers, who are still so, although ye do not treat me as a brother, I tell ye that if I could enlist in this war, God knows it would be on the right side." I have not been moved to tears since I heard him last, but I sat and wept like a child, as these words of fire, heavenly fire, flowed from his lips. I did not know then, and I do not know now, what it was that moved me so deeply; perhaps it was a sense of the hope so vivid in him, yet so long postponed by man and time, of the gentlest and most universal harmony. Perhaps it was a vague sorrow at the inscrutability of fate, which baffled so generous and pure a soul in a cause where advance can be really made by nothing but a deep practical wisdom, which he does not possess; which seems so cold and narrow, and yet which was enjoined by Jesus upon his disciples, the wisdom of the serpent and the innocence of the dove. The innocence seems so much greater and deeper, sufficient for angels and an angelic life, but there must be the wisdom which is only the reflection of that celestial life. It was a rare enjoyment. When I came away, I felt how much one good man redeems the wicked world, which then does not seem wicked, but sadly wandering and groping for the gate of heaven!

IX.

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST.

MR. CHANNING called himself a socialist. And so he was. That is to say, his supreme interest was in the condition of society, in the elevation of man as man, without regard to rank, wealth, cultivation, birth, or any external differences. In fact, he held those differences in abhorrence except as opportunities of usefulness to the community at large. He demanded substantial equality among all the children of the universal Father. He would break down all barriers of privilege, would destroy all badges of authority, and inasmuch as the privations of the poor were the most crying facts to observing eyes, his absorbing concern was with these. But he looked beyond society to a superhuman world. In his view all power came from above, from the Lord and Giver of Life, from the Holy Spirit of divine truth and love. He was a devout theist, an earnest disciple of Christ, an enthusiastic believer in immortality. His gaze was ever directed heavenward, and his effort was to make men look upward, not in search of temporal advantages, but in assured hope of eternal joys. His warfare with every kind of bondage, physical or metaphysical, secular or priestly, was mingled with a burning desire for moral and religious elevation. In a word, he merely laid more emphasis on points he had always insisted on. He made himself the apostle of

truths of which he had formerly been a preacher only. There was really no change, but some sentences were printed in italics that had been left in common text before. His strength was spent in the endeavor to show that the race was the true incarnation of God.

As early as 1839, in an address delivered before the Dialectical Society of Cincinnati, an address warmly received and responded to, he said : —

That I may not be thought to be talking at random, and using vague words of exaggeration, let me for a moment call your attention to one of the countless manifestations of this spirit of free inquiry. Throughout Europe, and our own country, are minds discontented with the present social state, and convinced that only some more radical reform than any yet attempted can cure the great evils of pauperism and vice. Agreeing in this common conviction, they differ in the remedies which they would employ. In France, only a few years since, died in a garret, of absolute starvation, a man who had been one of the wealthiest bankers of his time, and who had devoted his whole fortune to investigations and experiments upon the subject of social reform. I mean St. Simon. Within a few months past a book has been translated among us, advocating, in words which have stirred the popular mind of his own land to the bottom, the duty and expediency of breaking away from all prisons of custom, and carrying at once into practice the great doctrines of human equality. Strange though it may seem, the writer of this ultra-radical work is a Catholic priest. I refer to the “Book of the People” by Abbé de Lamennais. Even while we are sitting here, a most imposing project is actually in the process of experiment, which confidently promises to restore to man his long-lost Eden by making all labor attractive, and so combining the results of associated effort as to supply at once the lowest and the highest wants of every human being, thus covering

the earth with plenty, peace, refinement, and goodness. Doubtless there are some here who have heard of the "Phalanxes" of Fourier. Meanwhile attempts, having similar ends in view, are rapidly multiplying the coöperative associations in England; and many minds in that country are looking with interest to the movements of the socialists who have only detestation for the atheism of Owen. In our own country, too, apart from the restlessness constantly received by contagion from abroad, there are desires for social reform growing out of the peculiar difficulties and wants of our own people; and we should all probably be surprised, if we were to see gathered in council the thousands who, in their lonely meditations and their confidential circles, are seeking even now for the means of embodying in life their highest convictions of the brotherhood of men.

In New York, these studies and aspirations were continued. Social reform was persistently advocated. He attended meetings, was a frequent visitor at the "North American Phalanx," in New Jersey, shared the expectation of the "saviors of society." His much speaking about Swedenborg and Fourier offended some. One lady of the small congregation remarked that it would take more than Mr. Channing to convince her that Swedenborg and Fourier could be a substitute for Jesus Christ. His antipathy to every kind of assumption led to the adoption of unpopular measures. For example, on Sunday evenings the speech was often loose and promiscuous. People whose passion for talking was in excess of their thoughts or their consideration for others, deluged the audience with words. At one time a ship-carpenter took up the parable. At another a black woman told her experiences. An Englishman who omitted his "h's" displeased the fastidious.

The "Present" was, more distinctly than its predecessor the "Dial," an organ for the ideas of socialism. The beginning of it was on the 15th of September, 1843. It was ended in April, 1844. The reason assigned for its cessation, as for his failure to write more for the "Dial," being the editor's acceptance of the office of responsible writer of his uncle's memoir. The sheet was a bright, various monthly, octavo in form, with reviews of books, essays, poems, all animated by the editor's active intellect and eager conscientiousness. To read its pages at this distance of time makes the blood burn, so full is it of the new wine of that day. Evidently a love of success in the usual sense had nothing to do with the publication. The work was one of love and faith. The manager seemed to see the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven, and to hear the trumpets of the angels. There was no sign of weariness or despondency; the wings of an undying hope flashed in the air.

The first number gives a "Confession of Faith," which is substantially a restatement, with some elaboration, of ideas already put forth.

The opening number also contains a warm tribute to Fourier, whom nevertheless the writer finds fault with as wanting in love, as contemptuous and arrogant. The social reform, the editor is sure, is even now "sweeping Christendom and civilization."

The second number extends a hearty welcome to the "Phalanx," Albert Brisbane's paper, the organ of Fourierism in this country.

The third number (November 15) has an allusion to Fourier, in an article on the "Call of the Present," which the "Phalanx" pronounced disrespectful and offensive.

The sixth number defended the judgment on Fourier against the "Phalanx," and repeated the charge of scornfulness while applauding the essential humanity of the Frenchman.

The last number contained an exposition of Fourier's principles, twenty-five pages long.

Swedenborg appears in the ninth number, introduced by John A. Heraud, an Englishman, editor of the "New Monthly Magazine," of whom a humorous account is given in Higginson's "Life of Margaret Fuller Ossoli." The paper is continued in the next number, and finished in the last. Mr. Channing criticised the account on the ground that full justice was not done to the Swedish philosopher and seer. The final issue classes Fourier and Swedenborg together. The sympathies of the radicals were very elastic and expansive. They demanded the largest liberty for themselves as well as others, and while they all pulled in one direction, they must each have a separate tether. One was intellectual, another mystical, a third sentimental, a fourth critical. The same spirit possessed them all. Mr. Channing was prevailingly emotional in the moral and religious sphere, and infused into the social movement the lofty spiritual sentiment which characterized New England. Others were with him, certainly; the leaders generally were. Socialism was, in Massachusetts at least, eminently Christian in aim. But the glowing enthusiasm of William Henry Channing prevented the cause from lapsing into bald theory, and was always exerted in behalf of faith. To omit that would be, in his apprehension, fatal.

The year 1844 was full of these aspirations after a united humanity. On the 22d of February he sent a

long fervid letter to Cincinnati, on the occasion of the inaugurating of the "Clermont Phalanx." In the "Present" of January 15 he gave an account of a convention that was held in Boston in the last week of December, 1843, and the first week of January, 1844, which the "Dial" considered as the earliest publication of Fourierism in New England. Miss Peabody, writing for the "Dial," said: "We still have a certain question about Fourierism, considered as a catholicon for evil, but our absurd horrors were dissipated, and a feeling of genuine respect for the friends of the movement insured, as we heard the exposition of the doctrine of Association by Mr. Channing and others."

Mr. Channing in his article says:—

This convention marked an era in the history of New England. It was the commencement of a public movement upon the subject of social reform, which will flow on, wider, deeper, stronger, until it has proved in deeds the practicability of societies organized, from their central principle of faith to the minutest detail of industry and pleasure, according to the order of love. This movement has been long gathering; a hundred rills and rivers of humanity have fed it. . . . It was instructive to observe that practical and scientific men constantly confirmed, and often apparently without being aware of it, the doctrines of social science as announced by Fourier. Indeed, in proportion to the degree of one's intimacy with this profound student of harmony does respect increase for his admirable intellectual power, his foresight, sagacity, completeness; and for one, I am desirous to state that the chief reason which prevents my most public confession of confidence in him as the one teacher now most needed is, that honor for such a patient and conscientious investigator demands, of all who would justify his views, a simplicity of affection, an extent

and accuracy of knowledge, an intensity of thought, to which very few can now lay claim. Quite far am I from saying that, as now enlightened, I adopt all his opinions; on the contrary, there are some I reject; but it is a pleasure to express gratitude to Charles Fourier, for having opened a whole new world of study, hope, and action. It does seem to me that he has given us the clue out of our scientific labyrinth, and revealed the means of living the law of love.

This implies that Fourier was accepted as teaching, not the end, but the true means to the end.

In April of the same year there was a great convention of Socialists at Clinton Hall, New York. George Ripley was president. Among the vice-presidents were Parke Godwin, Horace Greeley, Charles A. Dana, Albert Brisbane. W. H. Channing was placed on the business committee. He read the letters of sympathy from those who could not be present. The resolutions, laying emphasis on the religious aspect of the movement, and commending Fourier's principles of combined industry, groups and series, joint stock arrangements, system of guaranties, were from his pen. He introduced them with one of his jubilant speeches, saying these words:—

It is but giving voice to what is working in the hearts of those now present, and of thousands whose sympathies are with us at this moment over our whole land, to say this is a religious meeting. Our end is to do God's will, not our own; to obey the command of Providence, not to follow the leadings of human fancies. We stand to-day, as we believe, amid the dawn of a new era of humanity, and as from a Pisgah look down upon a promised land.

This was his mood at that time. As the convention

was about to adjourn, Mr. Channing called on them to remember, "as in the presence of God," their solemn privileges and responsibilities. The address was most touching in its devout humility, — most exalted in its ascription of glory to the supreme benig- nity. A prayer followed, and the convention broke up with an expression of praise, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

On the 4th of July the "North American Phalanx," then recently organized in Monmouth County, New Jersey, on the plan of Fourier, held a celebra- tion. The founders of it were chiefly in New York, though Albany and other cities furnished supporters. Still hopes were centred mainly in Brook Farm. Mr. Channing was a great deal there. In the summer of 1846, the summer he was preaching at West Rox- bury, he was there constantly, talking in private, preaching in public, in full sympathy with the high- est aims of the community, stimulating those aims to the utmost extent of his power, and eulogizing Fou- rier as the discoverer of the method of organization. He had many friends at West Roxbury, some who were entirely at one with him in his holiest, aspira- tions. His light always shone at its highest and threw a broad beam upon the path of less radiant mortals. But his work was mainly that of an in- spirer. In 1870 Mr. John Humphrey Noyes, of the Wallingford Community, published a "History of American Socialism," in which he imputed the origin of Brook Farm to Dr. Channing and its conversion to Fourierism to his nephew. Mr. Channing read this book carefully, with pleasure and sympathy, and wrote this letter to the author.

65 BEACON STREET, BOSTON, *January 13, 1870.*

REV. J. H. NOYES:

DEAR SIR, — Yesterday I gained a first glimpse at your "History of American Socialism,"— and ran directly through it from beginning to end, before laying it down, so wonderfully interesting did it prove to be. As soon as possible I hope thoroughly to read and digest it. Meanwhile after first heartily thanking you for this important and long needed contribution to our nation's social history, I feel bound instantly to avail myself of the invitation in your preface.

In your next edition will you make two corrections which I briefly indicate, as I am much pressed for time just now. First, Chapter XI. should be, without a doubt, headed "Ripley's Brook Farm." Of course, my revered uncle deeply sympathized with his younger friend's heroic efforts, and wished all success to the movement. But he did not encourage it so far as I understand; for in judgment he distrusted the prudence of the enterprise, and foreboded failure from the outset. He honored and admired the spirit of self-sacrifice and generous humanity which prompted the leaders, and he hoped that the experiment, even if unsuccessful, would teach valuable lessons of a higher toned social life. But it was George Ripley, aided by his noble wife Sophia [Dana] (who afterwards became a devoted Roman Catholic), — it was George Ripley, I say, and Ripley alone, who truly originated Brook Farm. And his should be the honor through all time. And a very high honor it will be sooner or later.

Second. In Chapter XXXIX. you have greatly emphasized my agency in the "Conversion of Brook Farm to Fourierism." I shall take back no words, apologize for no deed, make no retraction, and you and all men are free to interpret my course as seems right and true. Yet as a matter of fact I had little to do with the transformation. My heart was set on quite another movement — that is to

organize and embody a living Church in a combined Order of Society, and for that end chiefly I labored in the "Religious Union of Associationists" at once in Boston, New York, and Brooklyn. My views you will find hinted, though nowhere fully developed, in the "Spirit of the Age." Meanwhile I labored as the Corresponding Secretary and Traveling Lecturer of the "American Union of Associationists," holding earnestly by our programme. But while gratefully receiving light from those two grand teachers of social order, Swedenborg and Fourier, I was never either a Swedenborgian or a Fourierist — and I fear my friends often blamed my lukewarmness.

Yours, sincerely,

W. H. CHANNING.

This corresponds with other evidence I have obtained, as it does also with the genius of the man, which was præeminently spiritual, and adopted this form of socialism as being the most scientific mode of the charity that "suffereth long and is kind." It is easy to understand how his enthusiastic tributes to Fourier should be taken for complete approval, but one who has made a study of the character cannot be deceived about the place assigned to the French reformer. It was the foremost place among the organizers, but above the plane of the organizers was the world of inspiration of which they might know nothing.

On the conversion of Brook Farm to Fourierism, foreshadowed in the spring of 1844, the adoption of a new constitution in March, 1845, under the title of the "Brook Farm Phalanx," the concentration of power in Massachusetts, and the consequent importance given to the experiment at West Roxbury, great efforts were made by the Associationists to spread

their doctrines. The "Harbinger," which succeeded the "Phalanx," subscription list and all, was issued from Brook Farm, the first number being published on the 14th of June, 1845; missionaries were sent out; letters were written; courses of lectures were planned; a phalanstery was projected (the building was in process of erection in 1845 and was destroyed by fire in March, 1846); and the brightest anticipations were cherished. Much was naturally expected from Mr. Channing, who was anxious to do his full share, if not more than his share. We have seen that he resigned his ministry in New York in order to throw himself unburdened into this enterprise; he traced out a line of exposition; he moved near the centre of operations; he meditated a permanent settlement in the pulpit of Theodore Parker, at West Roxbury. But ill health, domestic anxieties, multitude of engagements, prevented his doing what he would. In the "Phalanx" and "Harbinger" both, that is, from the spring of 1843 till the autumn of 1847, a little more than five years, he wrote but 39 articles (a significant number), while J. S. Dwight wrote 324, George Ripley 315, and C. A. Dana 248. On Christmas Day, 1845, he sent a photograph of the Crucifixion, a present from Marcus Spring, to Brook Farm, with the accompanying greeting.

Christmas Day, 1845.

The Angels, when they sang their "Gloria in Excelsis," saw, in prospective, the Agony of Calvary; the Burial in the Tomb.

But the burden of their hymn was only Glory, Peace, Good-will.

For was not the dark shadow of suffering swallowed up in the light of love, which beamed from the undying sweet-

ness of the lips and brow? And was not the tomb the palace-door, through which the Prince of Immortality entered to seat himself upon the everlasting throne of the Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth?

We have heard the heavenly voices heralding us onwards to the holy manger, where lay in a glory of promise the divine form of humanity. Our hearts have vibrated to the chorus of hope and thanksgiving. We have shouted Immanuel. The chrism of universal love has anointed us from the breath of this great inspiration.

What matters it, then, that the idle world cries "Crucify;" that it wags its head, saying, "Thou that wouldst save the world, canst thou save thyself?" What matters it that the beautiful body of this Son of Man, crowned Son of God, may seem lifeless?

On the third day, He shall rise again, glorified and immortal, to bless our race forever.

The Crucifixion seems a fitting gift for Christmas, from Associationist to Associationists in these days of trial. Let us learn from it the spirit in which by patience and devotedness to make our lives a perpetual song of praise. The time is not distant when we shall say to each other, "He is risen."

This beautiful present is from Marcus Spring, and I need not say how happy I am by such an exquisite symbol to be able to signify to you all, what I would say to you, if I could. Let Faith and Hope and Love be angels, forever chanting their Benediction. We shall yet live to see Glory, Peace, Good-will descend to make mankind a tabernacle for indwelling God.

Your brother in humanity,
W. H. CHANNING.

Less than three months later the phalanstery went up in flame, and Brook Farm was virtually ended. The heroism of its friends gave it a speculative existence for a year longer, but on March 4, 1847, a

meeting was held which proved to be a summons for dissolution. This catastrophe was anticipated, and two months before this William Channing called the faithful to another effort. This is alluded to in a letter to J. S. Dwight, written in November, 1846.

November 8, 1846.

DEAR JOHN, — This morning I passed in the woods reflecting upon the proposed movement in Boston this winter, and the result of my meditation is, that, so far as I am concerned, I am ready. True! we are none of us really worthy in character to present a visible type of that largeness, freedom, rich variety, harmonious action, freshness, simplicity of feeling, which are alone becoming the apostles of Universal Unity. But we shall not be worthy, till to our convictions are added suitable conditions. Our life is a Trinity in Unity, and holiness, truth, humanity, are indivisible as brain, blood, and extremities. Our piety is a longing of the spirit for the very "fullness of God" in us, and it is a longing which cannot be satisfied till we live united with fellow-seekers of a divine-humanity in societies of heartily coöperating men and women. Out of our very consciousness of imperfection, undevelopment, distortion, comes then our motive to go forward in our mission.

True again! we none of us have a theology, a science of the divine, that deserves the name. We are watchers in the dawn, and though the gleams are in higher clouds, we do not yet see the sun. But after years of weary perplexities, like fever dreams, I feel sure for one that I really am awake, or awaking, and that I am looking towards the east, to say no more. Many mysteries have been becoming clearer through this summer and autumn, and I feel more prepared than ever before to answer to the yearning cry, "Watchman, what of the night." It is with a sweet-toned golden trumpet we may rouse the sleepers. And perhaps before the sluggards are shaking themselves from their visions of the past, it will be all glowing

sunshine. Intellectually, we are surely seeking in the right direction. How very, very much is contained in that assertion, if one is conscious of the latent skepticism and the patent error all around us.

Then as regards the third part of the religious life, the *body* of the soul and spirit, we know that we are in harmony with God's method. OUR WHOLE EFFORT IS CHARITY. And the more we know — to complete the circle, and to come back to my first statement — that it is only by fullness of love in all the social relations that we can become one with Him, whose sphere and existence are love. Out of idealism, and pantheism, and ego-ism have we passed into realism, and mediation, and immortal communion. We have a religion to announce to our fellows. And our watch-cry is once again, in the most emphatic meaning of the words, "The Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth." In all this there is nothing new in thought or in expression; but to me, as I write, there is the most rich and glorious newness of spirit. I cannot convey to you my impression of the reality of this movement in which it is our joy to be co-workers. I am, I believe, a Christian, as I have never yet been, and recognize a profoundness of significance in that symbol of God-in-Man, and a nearness in his present relations to humanity, which make passing events and every scene warm with the pulsations of a heavenly life. But yet I wait, as we are all waiting, for the "season of refreshing from on high." Not on us alone, my friend, depends the progress of the grand at-one-ment. (I mean by "us" the Associationists in Europe and the United States.) The spiritual world through the whole age, and especially in Christendom, is waiting with us. And it is with a spirit of confident humility, of an unabashed and most serene hope, that we may go forward. We cannot fail.

At the same time, however, that I thus decidedly, without if, but, or peradventure, express my willingness to

take any stand which we all think best, I also say with like decision, I am in no haste. Seeing how vast are the connections and dependencies of this movement we may well be patient, and above all calm. Judge, then, wisely as regards this whole winter campaign and the relations of its various parts. The Church, the lectures, and the formation of a union, etc., all are necessary functions; but what is their order? Do they move forward together, or which precedes? Of course you will understand from the whole of this letter that I expect fully to be in Boston or the neighborhood this winter. The New York experience has not been lost upon me, and when a movement is made in Boston, it must be made to succeed. Meanwhile I should be glad to hear the result of your consultation. I take it for granted the lectures go on in any event.

Faithfully yours,

W. H. CHANNING.

The warmth of Mr. Channing's interest in Brook Farm cannot be suspected. He was felt all through it. His words were strong, but his actions were more demonstrative still. Still he had his misgivings. The truth may as well be told. It was, as constituted, not spiritual enough for him. In 1846, just after the fire, he wrote to a friend a frank letter, — somewhat too frank. I have struck out some of the phrases.

Wednesday Evening, March 10, 1846.

1. The association movement was vitiated from the outset by heated enthusiasm and rash endeavor. I say vitiated, for it would be impious for me to doubt that the fundamental principle of this movement was a providential inspiration. But how much truer would its whole development have been had humility, sadness over human suffering, calmness, caution, governed in its councils. There was too much haste, too much spasm. Yet observe, I say this

by way of criticism, only because I feel how sacred was the impulse which has prompted this movement. The time had come, the world was waiting. God gave the word; and with what purity of heart and hand, with what holy hope, with what devotedness, should this Ark have been lifted to carry before the host! Does it not seem as if it needed long discipline of a whole people to be fit for such a movement? The religious convictions, the practical principles, the judgment and knowledge, the means and talents of the whole age needed to be baptized in the new Spirit of Life. A quarter of a century of preaching and conversation, and gathering of facilities, would not have seemed too much for such an enterprise. It seemed, too, as if one isolated attempt at association was at once an impossibility and an absurdity; because its ownership of land, its mode of acquiring and holding property, — its relations of barter on all sides, — and its necessarily exclusive position, must violate the very principles of association. Only associated associations, throughout a whole nation, could at all adequately embody the principle. To complete the solution of the religious, political, and scientific problems — so as to prove that man's material and spiritual discipline are but opposite poles of one existence, and was to show that the church, college, commonwealth, should be one, a unity in variety — needed apparently a long period. And the whole nation was to be awakened to a new comprehension of its mission, its essential principle, its sins, its true reform, etc., etc. But on the other hand, to condemn the prevalent sophistries, empty professions, incompleteness of society, except by an actual attempt, was a prevailing question. Moreover those who were convicted of sin wished at once to report, and many longed to realize, at the earliest possible hour, so great a good as was promised. And thus the premature, practical attempt at realization seemed inevitable, and was actually made. But I confess it seemed to me rash and risky. The time had not come for the ful-

fillment of this sublime plan of social organization, probably.

2. But supposing that the season had arrived in the great year of events ; supposing that it was necessary to graft this bud of the tree of life upon the decaying trunk of the tree of knowledge, for the end of obtaining one fruit for future seed. Still what disinterestedness, large wisdom, energy, and skill, and all combined in rich harmony, were needed in the leaders of such an enterprise ! Where was there prophet, priest, king, to be its head ? Ah me ! our good friends were sick of life's pressures and trials, filled with a higher ideal than the popular one, strong in courage and will, quick witted and sagacious, energetic and eager ; but where was prayerfulness, obedience, gentleness, and forgiving tolerance, large reason with keen common sense, and enterprise sound and exact as the worldling's ? I am not more severe to others than to myself, for I admit, nay, assert, my own utter unfitness for such an enterprise. Yet here again, I would not be profane. I do think that many of the Associationists are truly of the elect. If I am not, then I have no sanity. If ever on this earth I have been called by a higher will than my own to do anything, it has been to bear the part I have in this movement. But I certainly, for one, was not called to take a leading part in any practical movement ; nay, I was on all sides hindered, and seemingly inwardly forbidden, until last summer, to have any close connection with it. Wonders have indeed been wrought ; our hoped for social results have been realized ; more courtesy and magnanimity and tolerance, patience, generosity, than could have been expected, have been called out. But on the other hand, how much ambitiousness and jealousy have appeared to drown the anthem of praise. Yet how prepare men for a prophet life, except by attempting it ; how reform their characters and habits, except by casting them in a new mould ; and what miracles have been wrought ! Is it not blasphemous to

question a process, the results of which have been in many instances so divine?

3. The attempt was ill contrived, worse executed. The land was only moderate, water-power wanting, markets not accessible, the capital insufficient, the debt oppressive, the houses ill-built, badly placed, insufficient, water scantily supplied, industry unorganized, business entangled, etc., etc., to the end of the chapter of accidents. It is only wonderful that this place has stood through such a series of little failures and trials. But yet the growth and unfolding of the plans and the increasing coöperation of the members testify to the possibility of associated industry under more favorable circumstances. The great evil, the radical, practical danger, seemed to be a willingness to do work half thorough, to rest in poor results, to be content amidst comparatively squalid conditions, and to form habits of indolence. The whole affair, then, sums itself up in these three questions.

1. Is there such a providential leading in this attempt, as to authorize its continuance? Do we see any manifest or even occult sign that this is God's work?

2. Is the social spirit such as to enable people by a moral miracle to overcome very adverse circumstances?

3. Can energy repair past defects, give a wise direction to future efforts, clear off this load of debt, and make industry profitable? What comes to me most deeply is this. 'Ah, my children, who have rushed unbidden into my vineyard, and torn and trampled the springing vines, if you will truly humble and exalt yourselves, truly consecrate yourselves to this holy work, fairly and steadfastly forgive and love and aid each other, and consent to be by each other schooled, disciplined, and reformed, if you will put forth practical energy, go to work like heroes, ye may succeed. Otherwise your doom is sealed.' But how much better, having put the hand to the plough, not to look back! Yet how much better to have counted the cost before un-

dertaking to build the palace! If this plan is to go on, these friends must rouse themselves to far stronger efforts than they have ever made. Not ten hours, but fifteen hours must be their toil. Not slight curtailments, but great sacrifices must be made. There must be no more halfness. They must make up their minds and thoroughly, as to whether they will or will not go on. And if the word is "Go on," then for a dead lift all together of the wheel out of this bog. Public meetings, increased capital, business skill enlisted; above all, devotedness and love in deed and in truth must enlist in the service.

Thursday, 11th.

I asked last night for guidance, and this morning the first warning given me was in these lines, lying on my dressing table:—

"Be thou like the first apostles,
Be thou like the heroic Paul;
If a free thought seeks expression
Speak it boldly! speak it all!

"Face thine enemies, accusers,
Scorn the prison, rack, or rod;
And if thou hast Truth to utter
Speak, and leave the rest to God."

The vision rises before me of a reformation wherein the doctrine should be as of old, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Repent, O Church, of thy unfaithfulness in practice; repent, O State, of thy selfishness in deed and want of piety and charity; repent, O College, that thou hast not proved the law by which all life may be made holy, progressive, beautiful. A movement might, should, will, be made to preach this new Gospel throughout this nation. This thought of church, college, commonwealth, will yet stir this whole people and make them to comprehend the meaning of a "Union of Freemen." It is my mission to preach this; is it not?

X.

THE RELIGIOUS UNION OF ASSOCIATIONISTS.

THIS was founded on Sunday, January 3, 1847, in Boston. From the Book of Records, which is before me, it appears that a meeting of persons desirous of forming a religious union was held that afternoon at three o'clock, at the house of Mr. J. Fisher, No. 103 Harrison Avenue. About forty persons were present. The meeting was opened with sacred music from the piano by John S. Dwight, of Brook Farm. Mr. W. H. Channing then read selections from the Scriptures ; at the conclusion of which he stated briefly the object of the meeting, and expressed the desire that was felt by himself and others to join in a union with all who felt themselves ready to devote their lives to the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth. He then asked a blessing from Almighty God, and requested the friends present to spend a few minutes in meditation and reflection on the object for which they had assembled. The "Sanctus," from Mozart's Twelfth Mass, was then sung by the Misses Bullard and H. M. Parsons, and Messrs. Dwight, W. W. Story, and O. W. Withington, after which Mr. Channing asked all those who felt ready and disposed to form a union, based upon the principles of the following Statement, to manifest the same in an outward act, by rising and joining hands. He then read the following

STATEMENT.

In Faith that it is the will of God by the ministry of man to introduce upon this planet an era of Universal Unity ;

In Hope of the advent of the Kingdom of Heaven upon Earth, desired by the good and wise of all ages and clearly announced by Jesus Christ ;

And moved by the Holy Spirit which impels this generation to long and labor for the perfect at-one-ment : —

We do now consecrate ourselves unreservedly to the service of our Heavenly Father, in the purpose to live for the fulfillment of the designs of His Providence, and do pledge to one another our faithful sympathy, counsel, aid, in striving to spread among mankind the reign of love, one harmonious, universal

“ Glory to God in the Highest,
And on Earth Peace ;
Good-will toward men.”

Thirty-three persons signed this Statement, and expressed their desire to form a Union together, by rising and joining hands. Among these thirty-three were William Henry Channing, George Ripley, John S. Dwight, Francis G. Shaw, Albert Brisbane, John T. Codman, Frederick S. Cabot, Mrs. Ripley, Miss Bullard, Miss Anna Q. T. Parsons, Miss Fanny McDaniel, Miss Barbara Channing. After the singing of Mozart's “ Gloria ” from the Twelfth Mass, by the same persons as before, Mr. Dwight addressed the meeting, recalling a publicly expressed wish that William H. Channing should be the minister, and asked those who desired him to be the leader in chief of the religious Union to ratify their choice by rising and joining hands. This was done with one

consent. Mr. Channing was unanimously elected. Mr. Dwight then addressed Mr. Channing in a touching speech, alluding to their long connection in the cause of social reform, and closing with the presentation, in behalf of the Union, of a Bible, "as a token of our recognition of God's presence in the work in which we are engaged." Mr. Channing replied in an impressive manner, accepted the office which had been conferred on him, and pledged himself anew to the work to which his life was devoted. Mozart's "Dona Nobis Pacem" was then sung, and a few minutes of conversation ensued. Mr. J. T. Fisher was chosen secretary, and the meeting was dissolved.

That evening, January 3, 1847, Mr. Channing preached to a crowded assembly at the hall of Messrs. Andrews and Boyle, 339 Washington Street, on the subject, "The Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand," and announced the formation of the new Union, with his election as minister. The sermon was preceded by reading from the Scriptures, the Lord's Prayer, and the singing of hymns. This was the usual order of public service, the customary extemporaneous prayer being reserved for more personal occasions, and the music, which was always performed by members of the society, being sometimes executed by several, sometimes by one, now instrumental, now vocal, as circumstances rendered convenient.

On the next Sunday afternoon, at a private house in Kingston Street, about twenty-five members being present, Mr. Channing presented a form of organization for the Union. This was discussed at some length by Messrs. Channing, Brisbane, Dwight, Lazarus, Carew, and others; but it did not appear that the plan of organization was altogether acceptable,

so it was proposed and voted that a committee be appointed, consisting of Messrs. Channing, Lazarus, Fisher, and Miss Anna Parsons, to take the whole subject into consideration, and report at the next meeting. Messrs. Fisher, Cabot, and Johnson were appointed as a finance committee, and were empowered to make arrangements for the public services of worship. The committee were directed to secure the new "Washingtonian Hall," on Bromfield Street, and to hold such services until further notice, on Sunday afternoons, beginning with the next Sunday. That evening Mr. Channing preached, as before, at 339 Washington Street, on "Our Relations to Christ, Christianity, and Christendom." The audience was smaller than it would have been if the weather had been better.

On the evening of January 17th, after music and reading from the Scriptures, the circle was formed, hands were joined, the Statement was recited, and Mr. Channing offered prayer and invoked a blessing on the Union. The committee on organization then reported, through the chairman, that no mode of organization was at that time expedient. It was recommended that the members should come together on Sunday evenings for religious communion, should engage in conversation, music, prayer, or should listen to reading from such book or document as might be judged suitable. The requirements for membership were then declared to be a written assent to the Statement and the joining of hands in the circle. On the accession of new members, the older ones, forming the circle, gave them welcome to the group. This was the rule thenceforward. Everything was done to make the evening meetings agreeable and in-

teresting. A spirit of genuine enthusiasm animated the members. There was always choice music under the direction of J. S. Dwight, Joseph Wolcott, and Miss Mary Bullard. The talk was bright, copious, varied. The formal exercises closed at nine o'clock, and the remaining hour was none too much for friendly conversation. The discussions turned on nearly all matters of social importance: Human Nature, the Solidarity of the Race, the Religious Question, the "Communion," the various Reforms of the Day, the Use of Sunday, the Movements toward Association Abroad and at Home, the War with Mexico, the Value of the Church, the Education of Children, the Relation of Christ and the Spiritual World to us, Prayer, the Work of Agricultural Life, the New French Revolution, Club Houses, Amusements, Difficulties and Disappointments, Grounds of Fellowship among Associationists, the Relation of the Religious Union to the American Union. Questions concerning the plans of management of the Union itself naturally occupied much time, and narratives of personal experience were favorite modes of passing an evening. One night, early in the course of social gatherings, a Rationalist, a Romanist, and a Jew detailed the processes by which they were led to Association. Passages from popular books bearing on the general subject were read: Fourier, Henry James, Mazzini, Hempel, the "Harbinger," "Spirit of Truth," and others, all exciting various comment. The members assembled were about the same from week to week; the participators in the discussions were usually the few men and women of original ideas. There were frequent circles, exhortations, felicitations, words of cheer. Symbols were used sparingly. The "Com-

munion," adapted to the new conception of unity and entirely unlike the Christian ordinance, both in idea and in form, was observed two or three times by the members in private. This was first proposed by Mr. Channing in March, 1847, in connection with a special monthly meeting for the purpose of forming a circle of members for the reception of new adherents. But this design of observing the communion met with little favor, though the plan of holding a special monthly meeting was universally accepted. Something like the communion was, however, celebrated on conspicuous occasions in this wise: At the head of the room (this was on the anniversary of the formation of the Union), in front of the central window, was arranged a temporary altar, — a table covered with pure white linen, — on which was put the open Word and a candlestick with three lighted candles, one green, one red, and one white. Immediately in front stood a large square table covered with white linen, upon which was placed, in the centre, a dish of fruit, — oranges, figs, and grapes; surrounding this were twelve goblets and a pitcher of water, at each corner was a plate of biscuit, and at the sides were bunches of flowers. A small cross of evergreen, trimmed with violets, hung behind the altar, against the white background of the window curtain, and above it was hung an evergreen circle and triangle. Directly behind the altar stood an empty chair, representing the unseen Presence. The members were seated round the table in the form of an ellipse, the altar being one of the foci. The exercises began with music; this was followed by Scripture reading and an address by Mr. Channing. Then the circle was formed, hands were joined, the Statement was repeated, the vow of con-

secration was renewed, prayer was offered. After this seats were resumed; there was more music; a few moments were passed in silence; the minister rose, spoke of the meaning and value of the Communion Service in the Church, of the close intimacy among the disciples, of the connection between the spiritual and the material worlds, and of the correspondence of Bread, Water, and Fruit with Wisdom, Love, and Joy. The elements were then passed round, during the repast conversation being carried on of a religious character. "He shall feed his Flock," from the "Messiah," was sung, and the stated exercises were closed.

On this particular occasion, one of the members was consecrated as a missionary, having announced his intention to labor in Cincinnati in the cause of association, laying special emphasis on its religious aspect. He wished, before going, to receive from the Union an expression of approval and fellowship. Hereupon Mr. Channing spoke of the three sources of power in ordination, — the inward call of the Spirit, the approval of the elders, the summons of the congregation, — asked the new apostle if he felt himself truly invited to the work, and, on receiving his earnest profession, proceeded to induct him. He first asked the members if they were satisfied with the candidate's qualifications, requesting them, if they were, to signify the same by rising and joining hands in a circle about him. He then, standing at the right of the altar (Miss McDaniel at the left), offered prayer, during which he laid his hand, as Miss McDaniel did hers, on the missionary's head, both being connected by the other hand with the circle; the theory being that the divine Fullness flowed into the

members of the Union, thence mounted up into the two priests, and by them was imparted to the candidate, who was thus set apart and prepared for his mission. The right hand of fellowship, in behalf of the Union as well as himself, was presented by another member, a Bible was given, a solemn charge was made; then, after a short silence, a gold piece of the value of ten dollars, rather as an emblem than as a pecuniary help, was put into the messenger's hand. The services closed with music from the "Young Nun," of Schubert. The ceremony was very impressive and affecting. It had an air of reality about it, inspired by genuine faith and feeling. These men and women actually believed that a new era for humanity was about to dawn. Theirs was a faith

"Taught by no priest, but by their beating hearts,—
Faith to each other; the fidelity
Of fellow-wanderers in a desert place,
Who share the same dire thirst, and therefore share
The scanty water."

What became of the attempt at Cincinnati it is not worth while to conjecture, though guessing would be easy. But that zeal amounting to devotion was put into it cannot be doubted. The members of the Union in distant places never forgot. Sometimes they sent money, sometimes messages of good-will. George Ripley met occasionally with the members, and told about association in New York. Mr. Brisbane described association in France. When Mr. Channing was present, there was always a fresh word, a new book mentioned, some bright aspect of the subject presented.

The public services were for the most part held at Washingtonian Hall, a room about as large as the

Meionaon. This was now and then full, but not always or even often. Something depended on the weather, a good deal on the theme announced. When popular excitement was aroused, or an awakening subject was advertised, the audience crowded the space, for the preacher's boldness and well-known outspokenness of opinion attracted a hearing. They were novelty seekers mainly who came, not persons interested in the ideas, and when the topic was simply religious, as it generally was, however originally treated by the eloquent divine, or when it turned on the principles of Charles Fourier, the attendance was moderate. The general public, it must be confessed, thought the place large enough, and did not call for a cathedral.

Neither did the treasury overflow. The weekly contributions varied, but were never large; never, for instance, amounted to fifteen dollars. The men and women, though generous, were not rich. Their wealth did not take the form of dollars, and faith alone will seldom move mountains.

Mr. Channing labored with almost incredible diligence. He preached, prayed, talked, organized, suggested plans of administration, was never visibly despondent, was never apparently tired. His health was uncertain, often too painfully certain. He was an evangelist, going here and there on gospel errands, — to Bangor, to Cincinnati, to New York. He was needed in many places, and absent for weeks at a time on matters connected with association. Still, all this would not have defeated success if the doctrines of association had been welcome to the community. He was terribly in earnest, he was always in the mood of aspiration. Even if others fainted by

the way, hope was perennial with him. One evening, after praying with tenderest love for man, for the oppressed of the earth, for the oppressor, for the alien and the outcast of all faiths, for this little band of believers that they might be true and abounding in love, he broke out into an exalted strain of praise, saying: —

“Glory to God in the Highest,
And on earth Peace;
Good-will toward men.”

So great was his humility that, coming once into the Sunday evening assembly, he said that for his part he did not feel equal to repeating the pledge of faith usual on this occasion (it was a monthly meeting), but if any one else felt like joining in so solemn a performance he hoped that his example would deter none. He expressed a wish that hereafter the circle should not be formed periodically or as a matter of course, but at such times only as all felt moved to the action. He was anxious to deepen the sense of responsibility for the life of the group, that it might animate the whole body, so that the priesthood should not be confined to one member, but should be shared equally by all the rest. The following letters to Miss Parsons declare the temper and belief with which he entered upon this phase of his work: —

RONDOUT, *June 25, 1848.*

Would that I could pour in upon you the air and light of this glorious morning! It is Sunday truly. I have been walking for an hour or two, looking at the velvety mountains, whose airy outlines are not obscured by even a film, and breathing the elastic atmosphere that seems refreshed by the thunder-storms of Friday and the brisk north-wester yesterday, and above all basking in the sun, which,

according to my philosophy, is at nine o'clock the most truth-inspiring of all natural influences. At nine and three our shadows measure about our actual length; at sunrise and sunset they touch the horizon; at noon we tread them under foot. Study these divine symbols of our own communion with God. Oh, could I put into words the flood of love and light and joy which has been poured over me, into me, through me! The thrushes were singing their deep hymn of thanks, and as I thought of the vast span of earth, which from north to south was bathed in the serene splendor of this day of rest, the very air seemed radiant with the glistening garments of the ascending and descending guardian angels, of those countless hosts of human beings who at this hour are slipping off the galling collar of selfish cares, and for the moment hearing in the music of church-bells a welcome to the Sabbath of universal love. But you can guess my feelings better than I can hint them. This was a morning of prophecy, one of the seasons of vision which occasionally are given, when past and future grow clear as the widening view of Providence, while the passing present rolls by with its deep, calm current. I know in an instant at such times what I could not tell in volumes, and I could unroll to you a chart of Divine Order beside whose beauty our talks by the Charles River would seem like a small, dull thread of outline. I am prompted to sketch a few hints, though they will seem nothing, I fear; at least nothing new. Indeed, my whole vision was but giving a body and symmetry, and above all warm life, to what has gleamed with shadowy, soft, floating, ghost-like form upon me for years past. My past, indeed, seems wonderfully providential to me in its suggestions, its gradual removal of obscuring veils from one abiding central glory, its opening by degrees into the deeper, nearer, more inward halls of a sublime palace, whose gateways I crossed even in boyhood. Does not, indeed, every one's past who is waked to any consciousness appear so? Within every

human spirit sits at its centre, on more than a royal throne, an angel of the Lord's presence. With what awe and purity should we draw nigh! There is the open gate of heaven, there the influx of celestial life.

July 16, 1848.

You ask me to speak more of what is given me to see. Perhaps the letter I wrote you is, after all, the brightest glimpse that has come, of the whole, though it was a most imperfect statement, too materialized and concreted. But the Divine reality of life has been presented in many ways. Still the old warnings are whispered, "Do not deny;" "Do not exaggerate;" and then again, "Do not limit mediation too much to one person" and "Do not lose Me, in the multiplicity of Divine media." Universalize the Christ, the God-man, as well as particularize him. Truth demands both views harmonized. There is an *a priori* principle and there is an *a posteriori* fact, from which, when we regard Jesus Christ, we see somewhat into the profound significance of his mission; a word of each in turn. First, the principle is this. When we conceive of the Divine Being with relation to existence, as it flows out from Him in arterial action, and returns to Him by venous action, or acts from Him by nerves of motion, and reacts upon Him by nerves of sensation (if I may thus boldly symbolize the relations of the Infinite One and the many Finites), — when, I say, we conceive the relation of the Divine Being to creation, descending and ascending, to nature and to spirit, we are at once made aware that the spiritual world precedes all actual existence, as the world of spirits succeeds it. The spiritual world is the suggestion of Divine genius, as the world of spirits is the reflex of Divine experience. One is the original idea of which the other is the resulting science. For this race upon the earth there must have been in the spiritual world a Divine idea of man, which by the very necessity of the relations of Infinite to Finite is the idea of one man in many men, the essential unity of which all collec-

tive and individual varieties are but existing modes. The Divine man precedes, is the spring of mankind. But he must embody himself through series of nations, ages, societies, and individuals, until actually this idea becomes a centre of unity for the race, by which, and through and around which, all men may become one. We must expect, therefore, a point in history when this Divine idea of man, which is really God in man, shall come out in the distinct consciousness and full will of some one existing man, and so form a crisis, a turning time, and become the opening and commencement of an incarnate Divine manhood in the whole race. This Divine idea of man was thus embodied in Jesus and made him the Christ. "The word which was the light of men was made flesh; and we beheld his glory as that of the only Son of God." Here was a man indeed, and in truth a Divine man. Thus we see him from the principle. The fact is this: that Christendom is actually the centre of the race; that its life, far from being exhausted, is but just unfolding; that it plainly is to come into a unity with itself, which through all worship, charity, legislation, art, industry, will make it a vital body; that by coming thus to inward unity it will be, must be, a centre of reconciliation to all nations and kindreds of men; that the most Christian bodies and the most Christian persons of Christendom are most lovingly conscious of influxes of inspiration, wisdom, guidance, from superhuman sources; and that broken, scattered, divided in all manner of external conditions, creeds, and sects, all Christians recognize that these influxes are from one source and centre, the head of the Church; and finally, that experience indicates no limits to the degree of this communion with Divine humanity, this incarnation of God in man. Thus looked at from the fact, Jesus Christ is "with us to the end of the world," the wisdom of God, the king in the kingdom of heaven upon earth, the fullness of God as mediator. Now with all the power and might of the thronging thoughts which this prin-

ciple and this fact suggest, let us read the claims and assertions of him who alone among men has said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" "I and my Father are one;" "As Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, may they be one in us;" and how overwhelming is their light of glory! Is not this the Christ, the Divine in man made manifest, the first-born of heaven? Yet as I said before, the word is, "Do not localize, limit, or formalize the Divine incarnation;" in every good man, good society, good movement, good age, does God in man reveal himself. This only is the centre of all the glorious unfolding, of the mysterious processes by which humanity is becoming a Divine man. So much by way of hinting another view, which might be indefinitely expanded, and which, though very simple, seems to me to harmonize, explain, and justify the faith of all ages. "I believe, help thou my unbelief."

BRATTLEBORO, *Sunday, September 3, 1848.*

I have re-read the letters this afternoon, and do not see anything which I could select to have copied. They are in my head in as good or better form, and I can have access to them if they are needed. They contain truth, — truth enough to be thankful for. Their chief defect seems to me now to be in their localizing, particularizing, and limiting what is plainly universal. The Divine Idea of Man is God in the form of Man. It is then one in many, not one, and can be embodied fully only in a race. Yet in the development of the races of the Humanity of a planet there must be a hierarchy of mediation, a heaven, and a chief or chiefs in heaven, which heaven must be parallel in development with mankind on earth. And again, in the fulfilling of the destiny of man on this or any planet, there must be crises, one or more, probably several, three I should think, at least, when the whole race needs that in some particular person the tendency, idea, and inspiration of an age should culminate. Now, by saying that I feel called to univer-

salize the incarnation of the Christ I do not mean to deny that the time and place in which Jesus appeared were in the fullest sense critical. Neither do I mean to question his ascension to heaven, thence to pour spiritual influences upon the Christian Church, and thence through mankind. What his position is toward the race, when its whole destiny is regarded, I do not know, and neither affirm nor deny. At least he is this, — the brightest type yet given of Divine Humanity, the fullest incarnation yet known of God in Man; and Christendom cannot fulfill its manifest destiny until the prayer is actualized of One in Many, manhood through Spirit of Love which filled Jesus to overflowing. What other crises have previously come, or await mankind in future, God alone knows. The times and seasons are with Him. In thus declaring my faith in all that the Christ has positively affirmed, while omitting its limitations, I do not, on the other hand, deny the just criticism of the skeptics, if they should indeed be so named, who, recognizing the difficulties of the traditional history, have been driven into extreme denials. The facts seem to be something of this kind. First, that Jesus was an Essene, and derived his training and impulses through the communications of the hope and faith and love of that body. Second, that he, in the shape of his prophetic thoughts, was Jewish, certainly in his expression of them. Third, that the books which transmit the record of his life were probably the story of his apostles, first narrated and then recorded, gradually gathering exaggerations and loose statements as it proceeded. Fourth, that, however originated, these books are seemingly so intermingled with improbable narrations and assertions that we are forced to accept their conclusions with much hesitation and limitation. Fifth, that the Church has fallen into all manner of monstrous exaggerations and distortions of the truth. In granting all this to the deniers of tradition, how then can I be a Christian? How reconcile the two views? Thus, first, Jesus is

to me a providential person, born, bred, providentially fitted for a most rare and unparalleled communion with God. In him culminated and flowered the Jewish life of the Oriental world. Again, through all his Jewish conceptions and expressions there shone out the sublimest truth of God in Man and a heaven growing out of Humanity. He did not err or exaggerate in declaring himself the Son, inspired with the full and abiding life of the Father, the Light of the world, etc. He was all, and more than all, he asserted. In predicting a great era in the history of mankind, as opening from his life and death, he has been fully justified. His whole spirit of love and aims of brotherhood have become the legacy of the race. Again, in his conviction that he was to ascend to pour influence from heaven, I have no doubt he had a bright intuitive perception of his future relations to mankind. That after death he held some mode of intercourse with his followers seems to me unquestionable, though the history of the resurrection as it stands in the record will not, I fancy, stand the test of strict examination. And finally, the accumulating experience of the Christians of all lands and ages confirms in the fullest manner his presence with us to the end of the world. Thus I am a Christian. Second, in relation to the Church, it is to me a providential instrumentality to reunite mankind, and thus reform the race in the Divine image. In its doctrines, its worship, its institutions, its progress, I see a manifest revelation of God in producing a heaven upon earth. No such power of Unity has ever appeared, and its power is growing, not waning. By it Christendom is to become Christian; by it the savage outcast nations are to be united to Christendom; by it, in a word, the race on earth is to become one with itself, and I doubt not with the race in heaven. An inspiration of Love and Truth and Charity has poured, is pouring, through it, which will fill it more and more. It is the Tabernacle of God among men, and his glory will in the future stream forth from it to brighten

the world. It is his central mediation. But I must stop. I have written with great haste, yet my thought, I hope, is clear.

The miseries of the Irish famine were then touching all hearts. He spoke of them again and again, urging a contribution for their relief. He was desirous also to establish some sort of a guarantee fund, for the benefit of needy members. In a word, he was thinking all the time of the cause to which he had, in all sincerity, devoted his being. His sermons were charged with faith. They were about "The Life of Holiness," "The Gospel of the Present," "Indigence," "Fraud and Robbery," "War," "Oppression and Liberty," "Universal Selfishness," "The Omnipotence of Love," "The Tendencies of Good and Evil in the Country," "The True Reformer," "Nature as a Symbol of the Divine Being," "The Unity of the Race," "The Religious Principle in Man," "The Sentiments of Friendship and Honor," "Providence as illustrated by Unity of Design," "The Christian Church and Social Reform," "The Church of the Crucifixion and the Church of the Resurrection."

The members of the Union were so much more concerned with the idea than the form that theological differences were of no account. At a meeting in 1847, it was found that there were eleven Unitarians, three Orthodox Congregationalists, one Presbyterian, one Baptist, one Methodist, one Roman Catholic, three Universalists, two Rationalists, one Come-outer, one Jew, one Swedenborgian, one Transcendentalist, and two Skeptics. They were not austere people, but joyous, as became genuine believers. Their festivities were frequent. On the occasion of

opening a new room in Bulfinch Street, an expression of gladness was on all faces, a word of welcome was on all lips. The smallest favors were gratefully received. When the current of events went against them, it was merely a temporary reaction, the receding of a wave preparatory to a higher advance. They could see nothing but victory. The leaders were continually devising plans of operation.

On the evening of June 2, 1850, Mr. Channing spoke long, earnestly, tenderly, about the future of the movement, asked advice respecting his own action, and at ten o'clock took leave of his friends, intending to spend the summer at the North American Phalanx in New Jersey. This was, virtually, the end of the Religious Union, though an attempt was made to continue the meetings in the autumn. For about two months, from November 3d till December 22d, there were public services and conversations, of which report was made. Mr. Channing preserved outlines of his discourses and talks, and had some design of publishing them, but left them unfinished. They were impassioned, various, timely, broadly generalized, minutely detailed, all-embracing; but the fire has gone out, the force is spent, the delineations would hardly satisfy the thought of to-day, and the sentiments could scarcely be made intelligible to the men of this generation. But the subjects are interesting: "The Judgment of Christendom," "Spiritual Conditions for the Christian Commonwealth," "The Divine Ideal of Property," "Coöperative Industry," "The Divine Mode of Distribution," "Mutual Assurance," "Administration, — Government," "Position of Woman in True Society," "Integral Education," "Unity in Community," "Divine Life,"

“Individual Responsibility,” “The Problem of Evil,” “Desire and Duty,” “Position of Jesus Christ in Humanity,” “Instinct and Inspiration.” The conception of Christ as the Head of the Race, an Inspired Man, was pronounced most satisfactory and most consonant with the actual teaching of Scripture. Kingsley’s “Alton Locke,” then recent, was hailed as a sign of the new age. But evidences of diminished force were evident, and after December 22, 1850, there is no record of meetings.

Nor was the summer a season of rest, except for a few days at a time, and that seldom. Happily Mr. Channing recuperated easily, as nervous temperaments do; a chat with a friend, a walk in the fields, an agreeable book, revived him. He was intensely fond of nature, of wide or lovely scenes, of fruits, flowers, trees, hill and valley. In forests he was at home with the Eternal Spirit. Morning and evening were a perpetual delight to him. It was no metaphor that the stars poured upon him heavenly beams. The power of Deity came to him as he looked on the common landscape. Every bush was burning. Then music was a great deal to him. All forms of beauty enchanted him, and he saw beauty where others saw ugliness. He took all things at their best. Thus he needed rest less than most. Still, his friends were anxious about him, and wished that he could spare himself a little. But he was too important to be let alone. He was always spending strength, always giving forth energy, always responding to some demand which he alone could satisfy, patriotic, social; for he had a multitude of kind friends who kept him at work delivering orations, preaching, lecturing, talking, and using up the force that he should have hus-

banded. All these calls he answered cheerfully; some of them most gladly, as offering him an opportunity for saying his word. On the 15th of September, 1847, he delivered the sermon "The Gospel of To-Day" at the ordination of his cousin, T. W. Higginson, as minister of the first religious society in Newburyport, Mass. The discourse was greatly admired, written out and printed. It was certainly brilliant, comprehensive, lofty, humane; but it is hard to analyze an aroma. Light is diffusive. There were deep things in it, flashes of genius, but unless the whole were printed no just idea of it could be given.

From 1844 till 1848 he was preparing the memoir of his uncle. In fact, the "Present" was discontinued in order that he might do this.

On the death of Margaret Fuller Ossoli, in July, 1850, he occupied himself with gathering up memorials of her. A projected convention of the opponents of the Fugitive Slave Bill called forth all his energies. He welcomed the proposed meeting with enthusiasm; begged his friend, Marcus Spring, to have it as soon as possible; meditated a plan for a Fugitive Slave League, with a common fund to pay all legal penalties; was glad of an opportunity to bear his testimony before the largest gathering of his fellow-citizens; and stood ready to subscribe \$50, to sign the pledge at any moment, to do all he could to create a sentiment of peaceful protest against "the iniquitous law."

That all this wore on him there can be no doubt. Fatigue and disappointment were natural. His intense love of his friends—Miss Bremer, Margaret Fuller, and others—was more or less mingled with corroding anxiety. Not surprising was it that he accepted a regular position, a quiet society, a fixed

salary, at Rochester, New York. Still, the first sound of the trumpet started him to his feet. The Prospectus of the "Raritan Bay Union" was issued by Mr. Spring in October, 1852. Mr. Channing gave it an enthusiastic welcome; begged that he might once aid at the inception of such an undertaking, and not come in afterwards, as at Brook Farm and the North American Phalanx. "Let us all unite to blend our ideal and our common sense. This must be in some sort a model association, if it is to be worth undertaking." Cordially, in 1854, he accepted membership, but as he had agreed to go to England he could not go to New Jersey immediately. However, on his return he promised himself the pleasure of taking up his home there. Fortunately for him as well as for others, the scheme proved abortive. There were many delays; a building was erected, but never occupied as a phalanstery. The scheme resolved itself into a school, which was very stimulating to the highest intellectual families, and altogether ennobling to the character, but did not succeed in engaging the public favor, and finally languished for want of pecuniary support when the war broke out. Mr. Spring was often away in search of health. The zeal of associationists was abating. The leading spirits were employed elsewhere. Other enterprises had failed. Mr. Channing himself was turning his thoughts, not in other directions, but towards other aspects of the cause, as the following extracts from a long letter to Mrs. Spring bear witness. His hopes were as bright as ever, but his retrospect was less brilliant and his immediate expectations were less sanguine than they were once.

ROCHESTER, *January 18, 1853.*

DEAR MRS. SPRING, — On arriving here, Saturday night, I found your two letters, with their interesting inclosures, awaiting me, together with letters from Mr. Arnold and Mr. Read, and I use my first leisure hour to reply. . . . And now for the Raritan Bay Union. The letters which you have forwarded are all interesting and instructive as signs of the broken and chaotic life wherein so many of the finest spirits are struggling. They are proofs of the problem presented by Providence for us to solve; but how little do they promise in way of solution! That letter from Mrs. S——! How truly tragic it is! What a brave, strong soul, — how tough and indomitable, how sanguine! Yet can you conscientiously say to her, “Come, leave your husband bewildered . . . in the quagmire of politics, break up the ‘wigwam,’ take the boys and baby, invest your last \$2,000 with us, and share our lot to sink or swim?” . . . These letters show the longing for a “home;” they do not bring one stone, or beam, or shingle for the builder.

Indeed, I feel bound to tell you that my own radical and deepest want in regard to the whole enterprise is of a Corner-stone. The men and women who wish to unite are for the most part of the very finest quality, but to my vision they have more the air of a shipwrecked band, who propose with what they have saved from the sea to build shanties and plant fields on this strange shore, than of dwellers in Jerusalem, who, sure in their city of peace, have gathered gold of Ophir and cedars of Lebanon for the Temple.

In a word, to drop metaphor, it is out of want and weakness, rather than an overflow of good-will and wisdom, that the circle gathers. The lack of material means is comparatively unimportant, except so far as it is a symbol of the lack of definite plan for the intellect, and lack, yet more, of true unity in spirit. As I look back over Brook Farm experience, and open my eyes to the notorious facts of N. A. P. life, I cannot but feel deeply anxious as regards this

new germ of the R. B. U., which we are planting with blind confidence that it is a seed from the Tree of Life. Are you so sure, then, that it is not an ill seed and apple of discord, like the others?

I confess to an increasing misgiving. No two of the originators are of the same way of feeling or thinking in regard to the very foundation of faith, or the method of working out the better life. The A——s are Liberal New Church; the W——s are “A. J. Davis” Spiritualists; Mr. R—— is a “practical Christian;” Mrs. T—— is a universal Believer, Hoper, and Lover; Mr. Le B—— is a Pantheist and Skeptic; Mr. Spring and yourself are emancipated Seekers, rather impatient of the positive; I am a Mystic, waiting for sunrise amid morning fogs, and sadly weary of my midnight wanderings and vigils.

Where is “The Way, the Truth, the Life,” among us? Very sadly do I own to you that the whole plan looks premature, fragmentary, and chaotic. If Mr. Spring were at home I should not write thus, for I would not add one feather’s-weight to his already overburdened brain, and you will bear me witness that all along I have put a drag on the wheel of what seemed a too hasty movement. Now if I am wrong in all this, set me right. Set me free, if you can, to give myself heartily, hopefully, to this new work. I do not conceal that, for the present, I am divided between hope and fear. I see that the estate may be rendered a pleasant country home for a few families, and that a wharf, with a machine shop, and a farm, with suitable out-buildings, can be established and carried on. A school of some sort, too, can doubtless be opened and carried up to a high degree of usefulness and success, if Mr. W. has the health and inclination to devote himself to it. But a cloudy air rests over the whole, to me. As Napoleon said to his generals, in answer to their descriptions, “I don’t see Dantzic,” so I do not see the R. B. U.

Accept, though thus late, my Christmas and New Year

wishes, and when you write remember me affectionately to
Marcus. Your friend, W. H. C.

This Raritan Bay Union project exercised him and tempted him greatly during these months. But in his case it was a dream only. His experiments in social reform were ended ; not by any means his faith in it. On the contrary, that continued as firm as ever, and fascinated him to the last. His heart prophesied the new earth ; his whole soul yearned for it. At any hour he would have given his life to see the vision fulfilled. Like the hero of the "Great Stone Face," he saw the coming of the Son of Man in every great person or event,—in Louis Kossuth, in the second French Revolution. He hoped everything, and if his expectations were wild, he confessed that this was his fault. His foolishness anticipated the hour.

It is remarkable, as we think of it, and altogether to his honor, that through this whole struggle he lived and wrought almost alone. His confidence was more than proof against mental solitude. He lived on his own interior conviction. Those nearest and dearest to him withheld sympathy. Even his mother, for whom he felt the profoundest veneration, thought him visionary. An extract from a letter to her, written in June, 1846, is valuable as an assurance of the quality of his belief :—

If unitary life is not God's law for society, verily then I am a madman. Oh, my mother, could your noble enthusiasm but gain ascendancy over your too strict judgment ! Then you would rejoice with me in the glorious prospect which heralds me on. It is a hard, bitter trial to lose the sympathy of one's nearest, dearest friends while following

the plain commands of God. But you will do me the justice, I believe, to say that for these five years past I have been patient and respectful to others, while firm and energetically faithful to my own convictions. How pleasant it will be in the other life, when you and all friends now grieved by my course shall thank me for my unfaltering advocacy of the despised and suspected cause of Universal Brotherhood! I live in hope.

In 1853 the same strain is continued. He is thinking of Raritan Bay:—

Let me say a word of the wear and tear of my own spirit and body. I can and shall throw myself heartily, conscientiously, into my pastoral duties [he is at Rochester]; but every sermon, conversation, charitable effort, prayer, only serves to prove more and more conclusively that the end towards which all the highest spiritual energy of Christendom is now resistlessly tending is the organic Unity of Societies, confederated in larger societies where religion and politics are made one as spirit and body. If I am sure of any one thing upon this earth, it is this. If this is not so, then am I utterly insane, and mind and heart are in hopeless chaos. Now when I reflect that this conviction is the gradual result of my whole existence for forty years, amidst as clear, pure, high influences as the present state of mankind affords; and when, further, I see that the coolest-headed political economists, for instance Stuart Mill, the most thoroughly scientific intellect now on the planet, Auguste Comte, the most earnest Christians of the English Church, Maurice for leader, so wonderfully justify and confirm the hopes of radical social reformers and the prophetic enthusiasts, it becomes quite clear to conscience that whether in the pulpit or out of it, I must declare the truth, or else be self-convicted of the meanest cowardice and treachery. I can only say in the word of the heroic Morelos, "If I am right, Thou, God,

knowest it ; if I am wrong, pardon." Now, the plain question of prudence is this : Will there be most wear and tear amidst scenes where I am actually trying to embody my convictions in deeds, even through failure, or amidst other scenes where I am reminded each moment that my profession and practice are discordant ? My dearest mother, I assure you that did I see my way clear to an honorable independence for my family, so as to be just while kind to them, I should joyfully die in attesting my fixed faith in association. And I predict that when, years hence, we meet in the spiritual world, you will smilingly bless me and say, "My son, your personal limitations excepted, you were right." You will feel proud of my seeming earthly failures then ; at least, I humbly hope so. If this is all romance, it is of that earnest, living strain which I trust ever more and more to be quickened by.

When the fire burned the great building at Brook Farm, on the night of March 3, 1846, he wrote : —

The sad affair has pained me much, yet scarcely as much as I should have expected. For as experience multiplies we see so clearly that life is an endless series of birth and death, of ebb and flow, of seeming failure and eventual triumphs, . . . that one learns never to mourn, but always to hope ; never so much as amid disappointment to trust and aspire. Should this blow be the *coup de grace* to this band of friends, who for years have been on the rack of anxiety and effort, I shall wait by the tomb for the resurrection.

More than three years later he passed a day and a night at Brook Farm, "to close the eyes of that old friend, and say dust to dust, ashes to ashes."

I am rejoiced, for one, at the consummation [the conversion of Brook Farm into an almshouse]. It brings into full contrast the highest Ideal and the lowest Actual, with a

vengeance. Posterity will remember it. Most beautiful to me was that last day and all its memories. And never did I feel so calmly, humbly, devoutly thankful that it has been my privilege to fail in this grandest, sublimest, surest of all human movements. Were Thermopylæ and Bunker Hill considered successes in their day and generation?

The "Spirit of the Age" died in 1850, after a life of about nine months. It succeeded the "Harbinger," which ceased in February, 1849. It was a weekly, published in New York. The first number was issued on the 7th of July, 1849, the last on the 27th of April, 1850. It was rich in thought and expression, affluent in sentiment, various in discussion. Its tone was Christian, after Mr. Channing's well-known conception of the gospel. Henry James's lectures on "Moralism and Christianity," then just published, were reviewed in the numbers of March 9th, 16th, and 23d. Mr. James was charged with Pantheism, and described as "a most sophistical teacher of monstrous errors, intermingled with highest truth;" the error probably being the shadowy idea of man, the truth being his social destiny. In 1854, on the publication of Mr. James's pamphlet on the Christian Church, Mr. Channing sent him from Rochester a hearty letter of thanks, giving him credit for his teaching in regard to society as being the full expression of Deity, and the regeneration of it as being the true aim of Christianity. Here is a draft of the letter, hard to decipher through the erasures and interpolations, but interesting as showing the loyal temper of the man and his undying faith:—

ROCHESTER, *March 15, 1854.*

TO HENRY JAMES, ESQ.:

MY DEAR SIR, — I have just finished reading your late pamphlet on “The Church of Christ,” and say Amen, — a cordial Amen from my inmost heart, and without an “if,” “but,” or any mode of quibbling qualification. Here once more I listen to the sweet strain that sounded through your earlier writings, as of harpstrings vibrating in unison to angel hymns, “Gloria in Excelsis.”

You can scarce judge of the pleasure which it gives me thus to record my grateful response, for you are unaware that among the sad experiences of my wilderness life on the borders of the land of promise few have been more bitter than the protest I was called to make against what appeared, and in all frankness be it said still appears, to be the sophistry of your essays on “Moralism.” I can never regret having made that protest, because it would have been dishonorable not to say and write what I did. But knowing my motive, it was most painful to feel that a magnanimous act was a means of loosening ties of companionship with yourself and old friends who centred around you. Pure and rich, then, is the satisfaction of recognizing you once more as leading triumphantly onward under the oriflamme. “In hoc signo vinces.”

But my chief end in writing is to invite further communications. Can you enlighten us as to the Head of the Church, the Christ, the Incarnate Word? The more I seek, by aid of John, Paul, and the others, to come into the near society of the Beloved Son, the more am I awed before the grandeur of his personal claim — not in any sense an exclusive, but a boundlessly inclusive claim, not in the slightest degree a selfish, but a universally friendly claim — of being one with God in love, and as thus one with the centre of all; of being the centre, chief head, heart, germ of life for humanity. Again I find that in moments of devoutest elevation I seem most to feel that I am one, by communion

of loving life, with God, through his chosen son and the vast family of his children in heaven, and am aware of an exhaustless depth of reality in the words, "As Thou, Father, art in me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." Yet I long, like those who watch for the morning, for a clear vision of this glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And I am but one of millions. So far as I understand the signs of the times, the most living and loving souls of this generation throughout Christendom are they who are thirsting most eagerly for a warm, vital, penetrating personal influence from the head of humanity.

Now have you a perception of the real presence of Christ in the Church, as the friend of friends, the brother of brothers? Have you such an experience of this eternal life of love, flowing in through an order of mediation, as fulfills to you the words, "Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world"? If so, give us another letter on the love of God in Christ.

Yours, in good hope,

WILLIAM H. CHANNING.

The "Spirit of the Age," which was edited amid the utmost difficulties arising from ill health, the unfaithfulness of some who should have been fellow-laborers, the lukewarmness of publishers whom poor success daunted, the indifference of the public, made cordial mention of socialists of every school, foreign or domestic; reported books, lectures, movements; noticed clairvoyance and psychometry; commended coöperation; made friendly allusions to Swedenborg; in fine, advocated earnestly and enthusiastically everything pertaining to the reign of love among men. Still, it died, and for this reason above all. The spirit of the age was not so noble, so spiritual, or so kind. The editor confessed that he was "brain-sick," and that it "did not pay." But he gave his journal up triumphantly, seeing a long line of successors com-

ing on to do its work: the New York "Tribune," the Boston "Protective Union," the "Nonpareil" issued from Cincinnati, the "American People's Journal." Alas! where are they now? Where is the "Nonpareil"? Who remembers the "Protective Union"? The "People's Journal," who has seen a file of it? The New York "Tribune" has forgotten its old devotion to the views of Charles Fourier. The ardent apostle never turned his gaze from the earth, but fixed it henceforth more exclusively on the heavens, like the Hur of William Page's picture, who holds up the arm of Moses, but at the same time watches the battle in the plain below. But Moses was tired, nevertheless, nor was it easy to obey the divine command to keep the arm upright. That Mr. Channing had his misgivings this letter shows:—

December 16, 1850.

What is my inward leading? To seek a settlement in the country,—within range of libraries,—where a decent subsistence can be insured, and where for a few quiet years I may be a father to my children. First, to preach seems the natural outlet of my attainments, and I feel an interest in that mode of approach to my fellows stronger than ever, though desiring a simpler, quieter, homelier, humbler kind of address than I have heretofore practiced. I could cheerfully be a village pastor and preacher, and find a content such as I should have slighted in the most common exercise of natural sympathies. Second, my whole soul, exhausted by excitement, disappointed, saddened, taught to wait, postponing, though not in one jot or tittle abating, its hope, foreseeing the impending crisis, unapt for contention, loathing violent measures, sick of mammon worship and political leaders and earthly ambition of all sorts, craves the stillness of beautiful nature. Cities are a hell to me. Third, I wish access to literary materials, for one part of the

allotted function seems to be to embody the results of thought, experience, aspiration, prophetic vision, in some worthy form, that it may be a guide through coming difficulties, and a herald of welcome when the era of reawakening comes. Also we would purpose to prepare lectures, articles for periodicals, etc., and keep in intellectual *rappport* generally with the age. Fourth, some home, some fixed anchorage and harbor, some centre for habit to cluster round, however humble, has grown to be a necessity. Without this I have no longer heart to work. Enthusiasm has been so prodigally wasted that there is an absolute need for some shelter, where the heart may find refreshment. A little house, a garden, an outlook on beauty, a consciousness of social ties, a sense of duty done to those nearest, a life shared with the home circle, — these I must gain, or become dumb and useless. I am not the Grand Mogul, with exhaustless stores of hopeful humanity, as I was when younger. Fifth, and this flows right into the crowning wish of all, to show myself to my children as a father ere we are parted. Ah, me! the heart bleeds for those two children who have been fated to be so fatherless. This must be righted once and forever, or I shall not pretend to be a preacher. Here in brief is the leading. Now what objections are there, what counter-leadings, what other openings? First, I have a mission to announce the era of the divine order of humanity. Yes! a glorious glimpse has been given me. But I feel the longing for contemplation, maturing, elaborating. Thoughts are so crude, partial, inconsistent, incomplete. Then the mere position of pretending to herald a new era vitiates the purity of the intention, the simplicity of the statement. Again, if I wish access to the public ear, the readiest mode is by the pulpit of a liberal denomination inevitably excluded. Let the prophet beware who seeks occasions, or runs before he is sent, or throws himself from the pinnacle. If a work of any special moment has been assigned me, opportunity enough will be

always found for fulfilling it. Meanwhile, I have sinned thus far by magnifying and exalting my ministry. God has ten thousand times ten thousand servants. It would be well to be more modest. I have a sense of being strung to too high a pitch. I do not affect others nearly so much as if I aimed profoundly at less. There is an overmuchness, an unreality, a castle-in-the-clouds tone, about my sermons. People would get my most quickening thoughts better, if they came upon them incidentally and unawares. This preaching by advertisement upon set themes, in series of discourses, has a blow-of-the-trumpet association with it. The intellect is put on the *qui vive*, to the damage of the heart and spirit. There is curiosity more than sympathy, a repulsion caused by the challenge to attention, etc. And I do no justice to the rich variety of spiritual illumination. In presenting one aspect of Providence, society, destiny, present duty, etc., I overlook a thousand others. Then again the problem is so immense which I have presumed to solve; and the solution, when made, is so volatile and swiftly evaporating. It is such a violation of God's wisdom to put our petty theories in place of his consummate order of humanity's development, after all, even supposing our theory a good one. Second, we have organized a church; it would be easy to desert it. Yes! But how manifestly premature and impracticable is such a plan! Even within our own body, what a chaos of crudities! And when one looks out into society, how plain that the era of the confederacy of Christian commonwealths is not yet! To build here a society, which, forming a series of spiritual communions within itself, should plan and carry out a series of practical transitions, industrial, financial, economical, etc., and implanting a religious community, what a moral force would it need to quicken, guide, command it! I am not the man either in heart, head, or energy. I shrink from the effort. If, with my present views, I was in the vigor of youth, unworn, unimpeded, healthful in myself, and free

in my conditions, I might set about it bravely. But now, exhausted, trammeled, without influence in the community, and, more than all, unsettled in my own convictions and aims, it looks utterly hopeless. Our union is a bud of promise: let it be offered as a wave-offering in the spring-time. It will bear no fruit, though it is a sign of the coming harvest. I might talk on for hours. But here is the gist of the whole matter, my leadings. I do not say, judge for me, since no human being can or ought to do that. But, as a friend, tell me how it looks. Am I a coward, a sloth, a fool; or am I prudent, a good spiritual economist, most consistent when seemingly changeful? From these brief hints you may probably catch my manifold moods and meditations. "Unto Him," etc.

XI.

ROCHESTER : REFORM.

THE period after the dwindling, the apparent failure, of the Boston experiment, was spent in various activities. In 1849, Mr. Channing was appointed a delegate to the Peace Convention in Paris, but, to his regret, could not go. "What an honor and privilege," he exclaimed, "in the midst of Europe in arms to speak for peace, peace only, always, everywhere!" Much of his time, all his leisure time, was passed in Rondout, where his family lived. There he employed himself in gardening, in tending fruit and flowers, in gazing on the lovely scene of mountain and river, in playing with his children, in making his wife happy. In 1850 the tragic death of Margaret Fuller Ossoli occupied his thoughts. He spent two days in July at Fire Island, went carefully over the details of the shipwreck, talked with the survivors, picked up memorials, and reviewed all the circumstances of the old friendship. He wrote a long account of the disaster, which he wished printed, but the story has been told so often and so well that his sketch, though vivid, need not be reproduced. The words of Mrs. Hasty (the captain's wife), "Did you ever know such a woman? Was there ever such a woman?" impressed him deeply. They were spoken amid tears, by a simple, affectionate, practical, motherly person,

and seemed to furnish fresh proof of Margaret's remarkable power of attraction and influence. A great many hours were given to reading; — "Alton Locke;" Garth Wilkinson's "Human Body and its Connection with Man" "the most remarkable book on that subject, I judge, ever written"; "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which touched him keenly. He heard Miss Delia Bacon, Emmanuel Vitalis Scherb, George Thompson, Louis Kossuth, idolized at first, but afterwards distrusted, as a "grand Christian Hero, a father of his country, a providential leader, the prophet of a new era." In the spring of 1852, he preached three Sundays in Troy, and in the early summer went to Rochester, New York, where he remained, with occasional absences for preaching, lecturing, attending conventions, meeting family duties, till August, 1854.

At this time Rochester was a place of about 40,000 inhabitants, with an annual growth of two or three thousand, a centre of influence and a nucleus for future expansion. The Unitarian society offered a promising field for effort. It had suffered a good deal from the loss and mal-adaptation of pastors, but it was united, strong of purpose, free from debt, ambitious of size and power, ready to welcome an earnest man of ideas. Its spirit was courageous, its temper cordial, its aim high, energetic, aspiring, free, and generous. The management was in good hands. The trustees were capable, liberal, courteous men, of large views. There was a Baptist college, which, though but recently established, already gave an intellectual tone to the community. A female college was shortly to open its doors. There was a flourishing lyceum, excellent school provision. The churches

were numerous and full. Throughout the city and in its environs were well-built houses, surrounded by garden-plots, indicating diffused wealth and general prosperity. It was certainly remote from New York, Albany, Boston, but this objection was hardly serious, even then, for an express train ran to New York in twelve hours, and to Albany in eight. The climate was harsh, but people got used to that. The country was flat and uninteresting, but Niagara was not far off. On the whole, it was an inviting place. On the occasion of his little Mary's death, which occurred in September, 1852, his people were exceedingly considerate, kind, and sympathetic; and at the expiration of the first six months, for which he agreed to stay, he was urgently requested to remain for a year, three years, as long as he would. He consented to be the minister for a year, with the understanding that he might preach longer if both sides wished for such an arrangement. He was unwilling to commit himself further. In fact, he had an eye fixed longingly on Raritan Bay, feeling that the minister occupied a false position; that the work of preaching, pastoral visiting, religious conversation, charity, Sunday-school teaching, though good, was not the best; that he was more than ever a socialist, though more than ever a Christian socialist. But the request was too hearty to be resisted. After stating that the desire was unanimous, the letter of invitation goes on to say: "We believe the society to be better united, freer from financial embarrassments, and its members more cordial and hearty in contributing to its support now than ever before since its organization. New members are being continually added, mostly on condition that you are to remain, and after many dis-

couragements the society appears to take heart and have hope for the future. The desire is very strong on the part of every member of the society, as well as of many who are not of us, that you should continue your labors in Rochester. Allow us to add in all frankness," say the trustees in sending this communication, "that we regard your remaining as of vital importance." The salary was \$1,200 a year, a valuable income to one who had a family to support and was somewhat wanting in pecuniary resources. He boarded in the family of the Misses Porter, ladies full of zeal in their opposition to slavery, and who were kind and brave enough to make Frederick Douglass a welcome visitor. Professors Raymond, Kendricks, and Mr. Wayland, all of the University, with other agreeable men who lodged there also, rendered the home pleasant. His preaching was perhaps a little too sublimated, too subtle, refined, ethereal, for the common mind, but on the secular platform he was eminently popular, and his eloquence drew crowds. He thought the name "Unitarian" a disadvantage, and entertained a project of starting an independent church, so strong was his desire to combine spirituality with freedom from sectarian bands, however loose. His view of Christ was peculiar. He did not regard him as the centre of the spiritual world, but as Lord over all the chief transactions on this earth, as the king of Humanity, a centre of unity for the Race. And this preëminence was to last only until the destinies of the Race were fulfilled. Then he was to exert his power as leader in the new life, always growing in wisdom and love, always striving to bring men into closer union with God. Finally, when all was consummated, he would enter into his own spiritual place in the heaven of heavens. Such was his creed.

The ministry at Rochester was an eventful one. Looking back on it after the lapse of nearly thirty years, it seemed to Mr. Channing of the highest significance, a "pivotal era in my ministerial career, and of a worth and import to myself which no fellow-mortal can well appreciate." The view of the Christian Religion and the Christian Church as a centre of spiritual reconciliation for the human race was his "Gospel of Glad Tidings," as he called it, at Rochester. The complete vision was disclosed to him later, he tells us, in London, by his studies in the British Museum; but a glimpse into this mystery of at-one-ment, coupled with an absorbing desire to announce it, was, he declares, vouchsafed to him. And this was the secret of his power over the people. This enchanted the spiritual of soul, and at the same time fascinated the lovers of their kind. It met the evangelicals and the rationalists alike. The "orthodox" could find comfort in this conception, in proportion to their freedom from doctrinal trammels; while the unorthodox had their demand for intellectual freedom gratified, and the friends of unity had their dream interpreted. Every special movement was connected with heaven, and thus glorified as part of the great work of redemption, while the light from above penetrated each corner and closet of the social edifice, flooding with radiance the individual and the universe. It is no wonder that the society increased; nor is it any wonder that the success was more distinguished in the hall than in the church, for such a theory of the Christian religion lent itself readily to general concerns.

Three reforms heartily engaged his energies at this

period, — the abolition of slavery, the emancipation of woman, and the promotion of temperance.

Rochester was the last station on the “underground railroad” by which fugitive slaves were transported from the Southern States to Canada, and no one was more interested in its operations than he. When money had to be raised, — and that was pretty frequently, — he was more than ready. Nobody should know more about this than Mr. Douglass, who writes : —

One of the few it was my privilege to call upon, and to call upon often, was Rev. W. H. Channing. His congregation was small, and his salary not large, but he gave like a prince. I shall never forget the sweet and beautiful expression that came over his face whenever I called upon him for aid. Knowing how self-forgetful and self-denying he was, I spared him as much as possible ; but he reproved me for this, and told me never to omit giving him an opportunity to contribute.

This was a cause that lay very near his heart. The events which preceded the War for the Union, the annexation of Texas, the war with Mexico, General Taylor’s death, Pierce’s election to the presidency, the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill, excited his deepest feeling. In sermon, lecture, speech, letter, conversation, he expressed his emotion. He made many addresses, giving voice to the fullness of his conviction, the enthusiasm of his hope. In an epistle written in 1882 to a friend in Rochester, he ascribes to the antislavery struggle a large share in his conversion to a more humane conception of Christianity. During the anniversary week of 1846 he made a long, full speech at an antislavery meeting in Boston, marked by singular frankness, simplicity, directness, and confidence

in his principle. This was the occasion when a relative congratulated him on his "courage," and drew from him the reply, "To say what I said at Faneuil Hall did perhaps require a little of the old Berserker spirit; and probably you with most friends will think me mad." In giving an account of this convention to his mother, he thus breaks out:—

Thank God! No spirit, when I pass away, will ever reproach me with a moment's backwardness, timidity, or time-serving as to this suicidal course of the United States. If but a few thousands, or hundreds, in each State had been as uncompromising, this outrage and shame [alluding to the annexation of Texas] might have been prevented. Well! it is a large world, and God finds room for all manner of sinners. We shall yet be redeemed. I have no fear as to final results.

After reading in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" he exclaims, "O Heaven! How patient are God and nature with human diabolism! It seems to me that I have never begun to do anything for antislavery yet. And now, with one's whole heart bleeding, what can we do? . . . How this book must cut a true-hearted Southerner to the quick!—cut us all, for we verily are all guilty together." So ardent was his passion for liberty that it overleaped the barriers of race. He was deeply interested in a convention of colored men at Rochester, and begged his mother to read Frederick Douglass' address to the citizens of the United States and his letter to Mrs. Stowe, and then consider that this man had been a chattel. "If once we get rid of slavery, how utterly incredible it will seem that such a nation as this has tolerated it so long!" The following letter to Mr. Chase, though never sent, is too important to be omitted:—

ROCHESTER, *April 18, 1853.*

HON. S. P. CHASE:

DEAR SIR, — My friend Rev. S. J. May, of Syracuse, knowing my wish to learn the views of our ablest statesmen in regard to the present aspects of the antislavery movement, has kindly informed me that you will pass through Rochester to-day. But as amid the noise and confusion of the depot there will be no fit opportunity to ask questions, I am prompted to open my mind to you on paper. I will aim at brevity. I presume, then, that I express the feeling of a large majority of our countrymen, could we but get at their honest sentiment, in saying, "Let us be rid of slavery," speedily, by some practical coöperation movement. We cannot afford to wait, we ought not to dilly-dally with this evil. Events in Europe, Mexico, Central America, Cuba, Canada, and within our own borders show us the urgent need of really uniting this nation; and united we shall not entirely be so long as this intestine war is kept up throughout every political, ecclesiastical, literary organization in our land, and enters openly or covertly into every newspaper, lyceum, convention, steamboat, car, house, etc. Rid of this one central source of irritation, weakness, folly, crime, we must and will be, and that right soon. But how? Such I do believe is the private feeling of a vast majority of the people, alike at the South and North. Now next, in my judgment, a majority have been brought to the conclusion that while abolitionists are right in denying that man can hold property in man, yet that the practical difficulties of emancipation are so great as to make it expedient for the whole nation to aid in removing the evil. They feel that sooner or later, in some form or other, the North will help the South to emancipate their slaves. And so impatient are they to sweep away, once and forever, the grand hindrance to our progress, prosperity, and full development as the model republic for Christendom and the world, that they will be ready to follow the lead of any

man or party who will show them a practical working plan of removing slavery. For one, then, I fear that a double movement will be made, having in view African or West Indian colonization, etc., on the one side, and the compensation of slave-holders on the other. And with the power that capitalists and politicians can bring to bear, the danger, it appears to me, is nowise slight that such a scheme can be carried over or through all constitutional and moral obstacles. And the only effectual way of preventing such a move on the part of the slave power and their allies is by a counter-movement in advance. Brooding over this matter for these two years past, the question has risen again and again, and ever with new force: "Why is it not practicable to organize a movement on this ground?" First, the sin and suffering inseparable from slavery in the United States of America are common. We are all guilty, we all feel the consequences of the guilt. Second, let us then make a common sacrifice to remove it, and so discharge our common duty to the slaves, the slave-holders, the freemen of the North, and the whole Union.

Such a policy involves, first, the distribution, so far as seems best, of the colored population of the South, by grants of land and facilities for transportation and settlement. Second, the encouragement of the depressed industry and prosperity of the South, by turning the tide of foreign emigration in that direction, by aiding internal improvement, by loans, by special appropriations, where justice requires it. Third, the aid of voluntary emigrants to Africa and the West Indies, etc., by national steamers and pecuniary advances. But this policy excludes compensation, because its fundamental principle is common sacrifice for a common duty, — in which sacrifice of course the slave-holders must bear their full proportion, and the very first branch of which duty is to place the now enslaved in a position of practical freedom. This policy excludes, too, involuntary or enforced colonization, inasmuch

as it secures the opportunity of continued residence at the South or removal to the West. Now I wish to ask those of experience and sagacity these questions: First, Do I read aright the judgment of the majority of our people? Second, Is there danger of such a movement within a few years, on the part of the slave-holders? Third, Can we avoid the issue, to which they will lure and drive the nation, except by proposing in advance a really just and practical plan of emancipation? Fourth, Is such a plan as I have briefly sketched right in principle and timely as policy? If, amidst the necessary pressure of business and care, you can find time to tell what you and your friends propose to do, I shall receive what you say in as strict confidence as you may desire, and shall be greatly indebted for any guiding clue out of our perplexities.

Yours, respectfully,

W. H. CHANNING.

This one to Mr. Seward, to whom Mr. Channing looked as a future leader, and whom he visited at Auburn, is selected from several as bearing on this point: —

ROCHESTER, *February 20, 1854.*

Thanks, dear sir, the thanks of thousands, for your masterly speech of Friday. It has been looked for with eagerness, and now by acclamation is welcomed as worthy of such a statesman as its author for its exact and comprehensive statements, its compact and unanswerable logic, its sagacious foresight and magnanimous patriotism. May it be promptly circulated by hundreds of thousands throughout the Free States, and swell higher the growing flood of popular resolve to resist this infamous bill to the last, and if it passes to repeal it. My end in writing is to suggest a thought which has presented itself often during the last few weeks as worth considering: cannot an amendment to the Nebraska-Kansas Bill be proposed, authorizing and directing the national government to purchase the freedom

of all slaves, who already have been, or who hereafter may be, brought into the territory, and to present to all slaves thus emancipated a quarter section of public land? Might not the proposal of such an amendment delay action in the Senate and House? Might it not make a division among the supporters of this bill, between the advocates of slavery as a permanent institution and the tolerance of it as a transient evil? Might it not serve as an offered olive branch between Northern freemen and Southern slave-holders, who now by the intrigues of a demagogue are forced unwillingly to wage sectional strife? Above all, might it not prepare the way for proposing that great scheme of policy, which soon or late must be adopted, — and God grant it be soon — united action of the whole nation to remove slavery from every State within our borders? And if this bill does pass, should not the national government be compelled to redeem? Before closing, allow me to add that during a late lecturing excursion in Ohio, Illinois, and Michigan I found the friends of freedom everywhere looking to yourself with confident expectation as their leader. They were waiting only for you to unfurl your banner. It is done, and they will rally round you like one man. From others you will hear of the powerful demonstrations made here on Friday night by a union of conservatives and reformers. Let but a little more time be given, and these proofs of Northern feeling will become overwhelmingly strong. Often as the slave-power has triumphed, this time I trust they are to meet with an ominous defeat, and so I subscribe myself,

Yours, in good hope,

W. H. C.

Mr. Channing's solution of the slavery problem was, it will be seen, characteristic of the man and of his faith, and brought him into collision with abolitionists on one side as well as with conservatives on the other. His, it must be remembered, was a ministry of recon-

ciliation, not merely in the sphere of doctrine and ecclesiastical observance, but also in the sphere of politics. He believed in the people, and was most anxious to get at their soul, reach their heart, quicken their conscience, touch their sense of duty, open a way for the influx of the Divine Spirit. His confidence in moral agencies was unbounded. There must be no quarrel, no disunion, no secession, no strife for party ascendancy, no contention of words, no criminations or recriminations, no sectional bitterness or jealousy, no blind ambition for supremacy, but mutual sympathy and coöperation. Both North and South must unite in discharging a common duty. There must be no talk of "compensation," for there must be no talk of property in man. The slave was a human being, and should be regarded in all respects as a human being. Mr. Channing had no doubt that this truth might be made plain to a Southerner as well as to a Northerner, or that, once apprehended, it would be acted on humanely. It was his business to bring about this end. "I am as sure," he writes to his mother in 1853, "as I can be of anything human," that I have hold of the clue by which this nation may escape from the labyrinth of inconsistency and suicidal folly wherein it is lost, and so brought into the open way of duty, under the broad light of truth."

In this faith, inspired by such lofty hope, with the hearty good-will of his people, he went to Washington, in the winter of 1853-4, to propose coöperation in emancipation, and to advocate the rights of women, personal, social, and civil. He preached there four Sundays, and was most cordially welcomed. At his first service several distinguished antislavery men were present, Charles Sumner, William H. Seward,

Dr. Bailey, of the "Era," Salmon P. Chase, and many members of Congress beside. Governor Seward carried him home to dine, was exceedingly friendly, offered his best services in Washington; and Dr. Bailey took him over the Capitol, to the Congressional Library, Supreme Court, introducing him to Senators and Representatives. He went everywhere, and was everywhere faithful to his mission, never forgetting what he came for. He talked frankly with some of the leading Southerners, and in public no less than in private urged the plan that he had so much at heart. There was no "mush of concession," no savor of compromise. He was the most outspoken of emancipationists, the most fearless of the sons of liberty. He befriended Miss Miner in her scheme of a colored normal school, an institution he helped to found at a time when to teach young colored girls to read and write was reckoned a grave, even a dangerous offense. He was one of the original corporators of the school, with which he was always proud to identify himself, calling attention to it, asking his friends to visit it, and never omitting to speak of it as a noble enterprise, timely as well as beneficent.

The cause of woman's rights was not neglected, though from the nature of things that was made less prominent. In a word, he employed his time energetically and steadily in executing the purposes he had in view when he went from Rochester, and if anybody could have accomplished that errand he could, with his earnest love. A meeting was obtained with eminent politicians from the South, and his plan was submitted to them. But they received every suggestion of coöperative effort to remove slavery, in fact

every proposal to remove it at all, with derision. Matters had gone too far in the way of exasperation. The policy of reconciliation was impossible. None but an avowed antislavery man could press it warmly, and such a man was disliked at the North, hated at the South, suspected by men of "prudence." Yet his reception by the Unitarians was so hearty, the attention given him was so close, the voice of the trustees was so unanimous, that in spite of attacks and insults, the misgivings of friends, the doubts of supporters, he expected an invitation to return, at all events for several months, if not to occupy the Unitarian pulpit permanently. The invitation did not come, and after his short triumph he went back to his parish. He was sorry, for Washington was the chief if not the only place where his favorite plan of coöperation between the North and the South for the removal of slavery, whereof he had dreamed and thought for many months, could be effectually proposed; he was used to the discussion of public affairs; he liked to meet distinguished people; he was fond of the varied and flexible society of the town; moreover, the spring, a delightful season in that region, offered a promise of health to his wife and children.

At Rochester the relative importance of reforms assumed a different aspect in his eyes from that which they put on in Washington. The antislavery sentiment was pretty well domesticated there. At any rate, the consideration of it in its various bearings was familiar. But the woman question was comparatively new and unpopular. I do not find that he took any novel views of this subject; he simply went along with the leaders of the movement, adding the weight of his character, the eloquence of his speech,

the vigorous fluency of his pen, to the cause. Adopting the apparent interpretation of the Revised Statutes of New York, of the United States Constitution, of the Declaration of Independence, and falling back on the "fundamental principle of the nation," as it was called, he advocated woman's full partnership with man in all the concerns of society: "education, industry, law, politics, religion, and social life." However saddened "in regard to women as they now are," he did not "in one iota lessen his faith and hope in what they will become," evidently taking it for granted that the infirmities which he fancied he saw were not inherent in the nature of the sex; thinking that liberty would remove any actual disabilities. It is altogether probable that the noble women he had known, his mother, Margaret Fuller, and others whose names appear in his correspondence, stimulated his zeal in behalf of the "emancipation of woman;" it is probable, too, that the examples of prominent female leaders in the cause animated him, — the names of Mrs. Stanton, Ernestine Rose, Susan B. Anthony, Lucy Stone, Antoinette Brown, occur frequently in the letters he wrote to his mother; but his spiritual philosophy, his faith in the progressive destiny of all human beings, was more influential still, and if he had been alone in his belief his enthusiasm would have been the same, equally determined, equally burning. For he was a man of conviction, a man of moral purpose, one whose courage rose with difficulty, opposition, derision. In one of his letters, dated October 26, 1880, he reminds his correspondent that at the First National Woman's Convention, at Worcester, "just thirty years ago," he was the vice-president.

It was a wonderful movement, the real germ of the great Woman's Rights Reform, in our republic and in Great Britain, for out of it grew Mrs. J. S. Mill's stirring article in the "*Westminster Review*," and all its long train of influences. . . . What an incredible transformation in public opinion have these thirty years wrought!

He writes to his mother:—

I inclose the resolutions adopted at the Woman's Rights Convention held here last week [November, 1853]. They were, with exception of the second and third, drafted by me, and give my view of the practical steps which should be taken to secure women their rightful position and influence. To-day these claims seem extravagant; the future will justify their sober good sense. I am calmly confident of the timeliness, necessity, wisdom, propriety, of this movement. And from those who now sneer and oppose I appeal cheerfully to posterity, who will honor with thanks the leaders in this great reform.

The resolutions are full of fine feeling, and contain all the thoughts with which we are to-day familiar. The first is general, referring to "the movement now in progress throughout the United States for securing the just and equal rights of women." The second touches on "the design of all true legislation to elevate every member of the community," and lays stress on the injury done to man as well as to woman by the "violation of this legitimate design." The third disclaims all intention of provoking hostility between the sexes, and protests that the sole end in view is the "onward progress of society." The fourth calls on "all friends of progress," and on the legislature of New York, to establish and endow institutions in favor preëminently of those who desire the common education of women and men. The fifth summons

"all manly men" to assist in opening new avenues of honest and honorable employment. The sixth demands just remuneration for women's work. The seventh asks that the State of New York will provide by law for the joint ownership of husbands and wives in their joint earnings. The eighth requests the legislature of the State of New York to appoint a committee to examine and revise the statutes for the purpose of redressing the legal grievances from which women still suffer. The ninth protests against the exclusive rights of the father in regard to the guardianship of children, and "invites" the legislature to pass laws "entitling mothers to become their children's guardians in all cases where, by habitual drunkenness, immorality, or improvidence, fathers are incompetent to the sacred trust." The tenth emphasizes the iniquity of constituting men an "impartial jury" for the trial of women in civil or criminal suits. The eleventh brands as "tyranny and usurpation" the taxation of women without representation. The twelfth points out the "manifest violation of the supreme law of the land" in allowing males to govern females without their consent. The last two appoint committees of men and women alike to address the legislature and the capitalists, including the controllers of industry in New York.

The addresses to the legislature were clear and forcible. The Senate and Assembly rooms were both crowded, and a deep impression was made upon the public mind. Mr. Channing now considered his task in this direction finished.

Having once thoroughly aroused the attention of the legislature and of the people to the subject of Woman's Legal and Civil Disabilities, I have full confidence that she will

be gradually, but steadily, instated in her unquestionable rights. This is the point to which I have been anxious to bring the movement, and now I hope to leave it. I have thoroughly done my share in helping on this great reform.

He discontinued his efforts because the work seemed in a fair way to be done by agencies of utmost efficiency, that needed only to be assured. Thirty years have added little or nothing to his achievement. His faith was only the more assured as time went on. Writing to his wife and daughter from Leeds, in 1876, he says:—

We had another immense meeting at Albert Hall last night, where the chief speakers again were women; and once more I could not but feel amazed at the stupid prejudices of men, who have so long deprived themselves of the inspiring influence and æsthetic pleasure of hearing women speak. What a power God has gifted good women with in their gentle radiance of look, and graceful equipoise of gesture, and pathetic melody of voice! You beat us out and out, my dears, and I shall be proud and happy when you feel prompted to ascend the pulpit or platform.

This was a subject that lay very near his heart. In 1881 he reviewed most cordially, in the London "*Inquirer*," the "*History of Woman Suffrage*," edited by Mrs. Stanton, Miss Anthony, and Miss Gage. It was printed in a pamphlet.

The temperance reform excited all his sympathy. It was one of those questions that in their moral aspect did not require argument; feeling alone was sufficient. Then it was mainly a social, not a legal matter. The debate between prohibition and license had not been precipitated, and the practical issue was plain enough. Strength of appeal was called for, and here his power was commanding. At all times, on

all occasions, in all companies, his voice was heard. At the World's Convention at Metropolitan Hall, New York, early in the autumn of 1853, he made a telling speech. At this convention his cousin, Wentworth Higginson presided "with great dignity, tact, and grace. He is extremely well fitted for public life, . . . and the eminent position won on the temperance platform will, I have no doubt, prove but the introduction to a constantly rising and enlarging influence." Mr. Channing's experience among the poor, his acute appreciation of human misery, his observation of the close connection between poverty, vice, crime, suffering, sorrow, and drunkenness, was so constant that it is not surprising he felt strongly about this evil, or that he did what he could to diminish it. He was a total abstainer himself, as, later, was his son.

The questions of "table-tipping" and "Spiritualism" were agitating the community at this date. I say "table-tipping" and "Spiritualism," because he distinguished them, while insisting that both belonged to the same order of phenomena. That he had long been a spiritualist, that is, a believer in special influences from the unseen world, is evident from the following language used in a letter written in January, 1850:—

The morning had been with me a rare season of illumination. In the afternoon I was sitting amidst a circle of the most beautifully harmonized spirits in communion around a clairvoyant. Wonderful thoughts took shape in that conversation, and among them this: that our "angels do really always behold in heaven the face of our Father who is in heaven," and that when we pray for one another those angels meet before the very footstool of the throne.

I remember my prayers went up then for Margaret. Life is very holy when faith is wakeful.

And nearly three years later, when he had been in Rochester but a few months, he wrote a letter to a friend about Spiritualism, of which the following is an extract : —

January 9, 1853.

The more I have observed and thought, the stronger has become my persuasion that the whole series of phenomena which now are awakening so much surprise reveal the degeneracy rather than the progress, the disease rather than the health, the disorder rather than the elevation, of our race. And my impression is, that the nervous derangement of which the subjects of magnetic influence are the victims produces a special class of temptations, which should be more carefully shunned than any others, — temptations to spiritual presumption, to self-exaltation, to neglect of actual duties in common life, to engrossing imaginations, to power over other minds, and to a desire to shape events not according to God's will, but to self-will, and so to become a providence and a fulfiller of prophecies. Indeed, I must go a step farther. Once I looked upon the phenomena of magnetism chiefly with scientific curiosity and sympathetic compassion. Now I regard them with dread. I am inclined very much to agree with the Catholics, the Orthodox, and the New Church men, in believing that the present perverted state of man's nervous organization, stimulated by his sophistry, skepticism, and superficial knowledge, has laid us open to a terrible infestation from the lower order of spirits. The reasons for thinking so are many, and among others, these : (1) that the persons who claim to be most constantly in spiritual communion are manifestly deceived either by their own fancies, or the spirits who control them, for it is preposterous to suppose that the noblest intelligences who once glorified earth have become now childish, idiotic, stupid, and weak,

as well in thought and purpose as expression, as their pretended communications would prove them to be, if real; (2) that so large a proportion of those who announce themselves to be mediums are vain, conceited, cunning, selfish, coarse, capricious creatures, who evidently cannot be in affinity with any high order of intelligence, whether in or out of the body; (3) that in so many instances the results have been so disastrous, physically, morally, mentally, to the individuals, families, and social circles, who have been most subjected to these disagreeable and deluding experiences. It seems to me clear, either that a wide-spread nervous epidemic has made multitudes partially insane, or else that man's present spiritual condition has prepared the way for a prodigious diabolic influx, or that the disease and the influx are mutually induced and aggravated. . . . Thank God that you have been privileged to know one grand saving truth. This central truth is, that Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the majesty on high, as chief mediator, and ruler under God, of our race and planet. I feel too unworthy to speak of this Divine Intercessor and Saviour, but if I may I would urge you . . . to seek him as the only source, beneath the Infinite Centre of all good, of spiritual influx. Then, only his angels and appointed ministers, in their due order and degree, will approach you. . . . May our Heavenly Father, and his Beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit guide and bless you through this life and forever. Amen.

Thus in regard to the higher phases of Spiritualism Mr. Channing had little or nothing to learn. In regard to its lower phases he had, at Rochester, much and varied experience. When he laid his hand upon them, tables danced up and down, twisted about, climbed upon a lounge, and even ran up-stairs, as if they possessed a mind of their own. His lightest wish was obeyed, and they ran, jumped, skipped, as long

as his force held out. The fact could not be denied. The demonstration was complete. But the demonstration of what? This he could not decide upon. As to the cause of the fact, he confessed himself quite in the dark. That it was a manifestation of nervous energy he had no doubt; but what that was he declared himself wholly ignorant. He afterward became satisfied that the movements were due to muscular activity unconsciously exerted.

In regard to the rappings and so forth, I am quite puzzled. We have tried two experiments since my return [this was in April, 1853], both being total failures. There is a law governing these phenomena as yet very imperfectly apprehended. I quite agree with you that it is very rash to trifle with such a subtle and powerful agency. The best book I have seen on the matter is called the "*Philosophy of Mysterious Rapping*," by J. C. Rogers. He explains the phenomena by means of the odic-force discovered and illustrated by Reichenbach in his "*Dynamics*." There is much plausibility in some of his statements; though I confess, for one, that no mere natural agency, however controlled by human wills, can explain a large class of facts testified to by most credible witnesses. Not a few agree with Charles Beecher, the Catholics, and the Swedenborgians, in regarding the whole movement as a demonic possession and infestation. I partially agree with them. Yet here again I must say that there are a by no means small class of facts which will not come under that solution; in a word, I am inclined to accept all three of the interpretations current, — viz., that, in addition to quackery and self-delusion, we must seek an explanation in odic-force, diabolism, and spiritual mediation.

This is altogether in accordance with his habit of reconciling all forms of opinion. It is not strange that a temperament like his, nervous, sensitive, im-

pressible, should be successful in experiments with electric forces; the only marvel is that his trials ever failed. It is not singular that his skeptical tendency suspected fraud, and traced to mechanical causes many unaccountable effects; nor is it surprising that his strong religious bias saw the working of the supernatural in what seemed to be spiritual or moral influences. He was an idealizing person. His faith in the invisible world was supreme; his sense of its nearness was living; his belief in celestial communications was profound, and might easily have betrayed him into credulity, — nay, would have done so if an honest perception of facts had not restrained him, and a certain faculty of intellectual judgment, quite distinct from practical common sense, had not checked his upward flights. He was always in danger of leaving the ground, and losing himself in the empyrean. There are indeed passages where an extraordinary perspicacity of mental vision characterized his opinions. He was prone to offer suggestions; the smallest details presented themselves to him, so that, now and then, he appeared to be the most prudent of men. But it was mental almost always; the result of a remarkable power of intellectual activity which was never satisfied till it had met all contingencies. Thus it will be seen that he believed in the actual intercourse of person with person, though never technically a “Spiritualist,” never a believer in necromancy. When his friend Francis George Shaw died, in 1883, he wrote: “The truth is as clear and bright to me as is this sunny summer noon that the world of spirits is very near to us, just as God and Christ are near; and that we can interchange influences with our risen and glorified, as truly as

you and I are now corresponding across the seas. Only instead of using paper, pen, and ink, and such external, material mediums, we must use contemplation, aspiration, and especially prayer!" Then he speaks of Oberlin, who for forty years passed "no single day without receiving tokens of his wife's loving guidance, her sanctifying sweetness, her comforting support." The highest spirits were evidently beyond all ordinary spiritual experiences, for soul must meet soul.

These were but a part of his performances while at Rochester. He went on a lecturing tour in the West. To what towns he went or what he lectured about is not reported, but as his brain was full of literary themes, it is safe to say that his discourses were instructive. That they were interesting and fascinating is evidenced by the rumor that they were better liked than those of Emerson or Starr King.

He stayed in Rochester till August, 1854. By that time his work in America was done. In an account of the society, published in 1881, he is spoken of as —

The thoughtful mystic who came and spoke as never man before had spoken in Rochester. It was a gleam of light, blinding to some eyes, but falling with such happy effect upon others that the short ministry of one year and one month is still spoken of as a season of special illumination. . . . The following he had here was not what he had a right to expect. His lectures elsewhere than in the church were well attended. . . . When he had made up his mind to relinquish the pastorate the society awoke to a sense of its loss in a long and ardent letter recounting his eloquent and faithful ministrations in this place.

He was more than forty-four years old, but his heart was younger than ever, as this extract from a letter to his mother, written in April, 1854, testifies: —

You seventy-one! No, dear mother, the thought never crossed my mind. Indeed, I cannot think of you as growing any older than when I first remember you. The longer we live, the less do we think of age. In heart and mind, you seem to me as fresh a spring of strength and light as when in my boyhood I relied on you as the providence at home. Only I feel like taking shame to myself that I have done so little in return, when I have received such constant goodness. It is very beautiful, this perennial life of affection. Often and often — and I am rather proud than humbled to own it — I long to rest on a mother's bosom, and to feel her good-night kiss upon my forehead, as I sink to sleep. Often, very often, I see you, as I once remember you, standing in the moonlight watching me, as I awoke. No, dear mother! you will never seem seventy to me. And for that matter, I will give a guess that we are even. Confess it, now, that I seem to you like a little boy, who will never get into his "teens," nor know how to keep his hands clean and his clothes whole, symbolically speaking. Well! age is a humbug, a mere optical illusion. The painters were profoundly wise as well as pious, when they represented the Ancient of Days surrounded with a cloud of cherubs. God is the youngest as He is the oldest of Beings, the brightest in hope and quickest in sympathy, while his memory is fullest with the experiences of eternity. If youth means vigorous vitality, we are growing younger with each new influx of life. And here is the assurance of immortality. From God to God; and between that origin and end, everlasting growth, ever-multiplied relationship, ever-deepening communion. Spirit is life; and existence is only the ever-enlarging interchange of life with the ever-living God. You and I, and all we love, dear mother, will be little children, new born, and again new born forever, and shall find in God, as old Synesius said, "the Heavenly Father and the Heavenly Mother," forever full with love to overflowing. Thanks that we have begun to be.

In this spirit he lived. He never doubted of immortality, either for himself and those he loved, or for all mankind. The elevation of the race was his constant endeavor, in which he never wearied. If one enterprise after another failed, the work of Heaven went forward, steadily, in wisdom and in love. The smallest things were, in his eyes, providential; miscarriages and defeats were contemplated in the divine plan. This was his faith, — a faith largely composed of hope and the charity that is born of aspiration.

XII.

LIVERPOOL.

IN the autumn of 1854, at the instance of friends, at the urgent solicitation of the society in Renshaw Street, and after much deliberation, Mr. Channing went to England with his family. The experiment was looked upon with considerable misgiving. It was certainly novel and somewhat venturesome. It was natural that he should feel lonely at first in a strange land; that his change should have seemed rash; that he should have looked back with regrets; that his dream of rest at Raritan Bay should have teased him; that it should be tantalizing to be so near to London and Paris, and yet so far off; that he should have doubted whether Englishmen would receive his mildest message, and should have thought seriously of withholding his most cherished ideas out of deference to a presumed conservative sentiment. But, as he became accustomed to the country and the people, his doubts disappeared. His acquaintance increased. His sermons were listened to with more than acquiescence, even with cordial admiration and sincere sympathy. He went to Renshaw Street for one year, at a salary of £400. At the end of the twelvemonth he received a hearty and unanimous invitation to remain two years longer, at a salary of £500. He consented to stay one year more, at any rate, possibly two; that would depend on the state of the political

world at home, which might be so outrageous from the action of the slave power in its ambition for further extension that no true American could, in his judgment, live abroad with honor. His fears were not justified, and he continued in Liverpool till our Civil War summoned him home. His first sermon struck the key-note of his ministry. Mrs. Hawthorne wrote thus to his mother : —

I am afraid I cannot possibly give you any just idea of Mr. Channing's sermon yesterday, dear Mrs. Channing. It was as grand and comprehensive as highest thought could make it. I have never heard a sermon, not even from Dr. Channing, so grand in its scope, so complete in symmetry and proportion, so perfect a unit as a work of art, and at the same time so rich and tender in spirit. There was not one irrelevant word, not one line that did not radiate from and return to the centre, and at the close it was all rounded into a finished sphere, and left the impression of an inspired poem. He looked not pallid, but a little pale, and a divine light illumined his brow and eyes, and his voice was as clear and eloquent as music. His brow and eyes resembled Dr. Channing's, and Elizabeth Bartol thought so, too. His gestures were as eloquent as his voice, and full of solemn grace. He was an angel of God, his lips were touched with the fire of sacred love and wisdom, and the grace and power of Jesus Christ were made manifest in him. His text was, "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." My dear Mrs. Channing, I am so afraid that you will think what I say mere enthusiasm that I am much constrained : but yet I cannot do any justice to my opinion or the merits of the sermon. Those walls never yet echoed to such a noble strain. Old England's air was never woven into such priceless pearls of speech in the name of God. Yet I doubt not that to him, who stood on that Pisgah mount of

vision, and told what he saw, — to him the result of his effort seemed wholly inadequate. But to us who were on the plain it was a revelation of wonderful awakening beauty and hope and power. Through his words, “the morning came” to us. Such a lofty faith, such absolute trust, such a generous, high, and radiant charity, were not before preached to man, in my experience. I was about to say I was proud of him, but the thought of him rebukes me for appropriating in any way so large a soul, which belongs to no country, but to the world. If individuals of every known sect and persuasion had been there, they would all have felt drawn to give ear to so magnanimous a doctrine, to so Christ-like a gospel. They would each have recognized in Mr. Channing a man great enough in spirit and in intellect to see and receive truth wherever it could be found; a man who could perceive truth, how disguised so ever in veils of error; and above all, a man who so dearly loves truth that it matters not to him where he finds it or who has it. Oh, dear Mrs. Channing, my heart glows as yesterday when I remember that glorious discourse. Such a sermon is the best possible proof of the progress of the world, and the best prophecy of the dawn that is at hand. The light of that dawn shone on Mr. Channing’s face yesterday, and so we know the morning cometh. It is to me an infinite joy to perceive that to a soul which fulfils all the conditions of going near to the counsel of God there is always open vision. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. And so, Mr. Channing being one of these transparent, unsoiled spirits, God shines through him. These are the mediums in which I believe, and I thank Heaven for the privilege of looking through such an one. And I rejoice that these good English people, so overlaid with custom and iron precedents and conservatism, can listen for once to this silver trumpet, and be refreshed with this mountain air of free and noble interpretation. I could not consent to look about me much, because I did not wish to

lose a glance or gesture, but in slight pauses I saw the deep attention of the congregation. White-haired old men hung upon his words as if they were the first words of life they had heard, and young men and maidens were equally attentive.

During the earlier months of his stay, his efforts to eke out his annual income by lecturing were not successful. The American system did not prevail in England; at least they had nothing of the kind in Liverpool. Then again, supposing that he should be but a short time abroad, he was desirous that his wife, who was fond of painting, should visit Paris, and see the pictures in the Louvre. But this was not feasible just then. Moreover, to one who was accustomed to the bright, stimulating air of Massachusetts, the climate of England was depressing. Mr. Everett used to say it was the best climate in the world to work in, and so it proved later, not immediately. But this is a matter of temperament. Mr. Channing was a high-strung man, and needed constant excitement, such as an old country could not furnish. Life was very different in Liverpool from what it was in Boston or New York. There society was fixed, stable, solid. Here was experiment after experiment, an atmosphere of change. Mr. Channing had lived among idealists, socialists, reformers, men and women of "views," utopians, theorists, dreamers, and now he was among people of an opposite way of thinking. This he sadly felt, and was consequently somewhat dejected for a season. But, with other causes for low spirits, it soon passed off. His energies returned; his roots struck into the soil; his family became domesticated; he felt at home in the new land. Hopes of Raritan Bay, and of eventually living there in peace and use-

fulness, haunted him for several months. "I see nothing else on earth I should like to do as well as once and for all, livingly and for life, to unite myself with your circle there," he wrote to Marcus Spring on November 12, 1854. But these visions vanished also, so that nothing absorbing remained except the dreadful national issue in his native country. That disturbed him till the war put an end to slavery. He wrote to Mr. Conway, the faithful preacher in Washington, envying him his privilege to speak a brave word for liberty, while dissenting from Mr. Conway's methods and insisting on his favorite scheme of reconciliation. He wrote to Charles Sumner on occasion of the assault upon him in the Senate Chamber, pleading still for love as well as justice, but confessing that his own non-resistance principles were expelled on the day Symmes was given up. He told the Renshaw Street society that every American must hold himself in readiness to go home at any moment, to assist in any way in his power the cause of freedom. He was in constant communication with friends concerning the state of affairs at Washington; and when, in the autumn of 1856, the Unitarian pulpit there was rendered vacant by the departure of M. D. Conway, who after a ministry of two years was compelled to abandon the post, the desire which he had in 1853 returned with all its former force, to go there with his message. He wrote to his friends, Gannett, Furness, Bellows, Clarke, Conway, Horace Greeley, Gerrit Smith, in regard to the expediency of undertaking the pastorate, and the prospect of freedom in America. The answers were various, but were almost all discouraging as to his coming back. At first, in January, 1857, his friend James Freeman Clarke

urged him to return. But later there was a unanimous opinion against it. Those who most wanted him dissuaded him. Even determined men like Theodore Parker, and old abolitionists like George Russell, declared themselves opposed to the idea. William G. Eliot, James F. Clarke, Moncure D. Conway, though for different reasons, thought it unwise to leave England now on an uncertainty. On December 30, 1856, his wife wished him "joy that a path of duty so dear to him was opened so singularly," congratulated him on having "behaved so truly and bravely" in his former disappointment, and said to him:—

You came here dutifully, and now carry home the prestige of a rare success and the devoted love and esteem of a company of good men and women, pure-hearted and true, to bless and consecrate you to your task. . . . My whole heart sympathizes with you in the prospect, than which none nobler could open to a man like you.

But when the plan fell through there was nothing to say. His mother approved of the scheme when first proposed. "I freely consent to his going. It is not a time to shrink from fear of suffering where any reasonable chance of doing good is offered. I would not for myself. I shall not for my son." This was in January. In June she said, "There is but one answer in my mind, and that No. Further action in regard to Washington would be not only quixotic, but wrong." It appears that there was no living society; that the antislavery people were neither many nor strong; that opposition to free radical speech was outspoken; that the meeting-house was so out of repair as to be all but useless; that Washington was a city of politicians and idlers, non-committal or con-

servative; that more good could be done in England by a perfectly free man than in the United States. It is not at all improbable that the magnificent spirit displayed by the English workingmen when our war was waging was due, in great measure, to the influence of William Channing, whose word ran very swiftly among them.

So he stayed in Liverpool, as a working minister. In 1857, Rev. James Martineau, who had been called to London to labor at the Unitarian College as professor of moral and metaphysical philosophy, becoming joint pastor with John James Tayler of the society in Little Portland Street, went there. Mr. Channing took his place in the chapel on Hope Street. His work in Liverpool was mainly that of a Christian pastor, but so fresh and new were his ideas, so inspiring was his word, so radiant was his presence, so earnest were his efforts after coöperation, so vital was his faith in human brotherhood, and so faithful was he to his own convictions, that the churches where he preached became resorts of the most spiritual people and Unitarianism a name for the loftiest aspiration. Still, he retired more and more within ecclesiastical lines. He put on the gown; wore a high collar and a white cravat; mounted a lofty pulpit; and these accessories, slight in themselves, doubtless had their effect in deepening the outward regard for churchly traditions. For the rest, his old socialistic conception of the gospel message continued and kept his whole administration vigorous and awakening. His enthusiasm was contagious. The entire Unitarian denomination felt it, and individual souls were greatly refreshed.

His letters to his mother give a full account of

this experience in England. Those that remain are nearly a hundred in number, and very long, none of them less than eight pages, and many of them twelve and sixteen. They abound in detailed descriptions of scenery, in sketches of people, and in comments on current politics in England and at home. They must have been interesting and suggestive once, but nothing makes one aware of the swift lapse of time so much as old letters. He went everywhere, — to London, Manchester, Sheffield, Birmingham, Leeds, Leicester, Kidderminster, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Brighton, Stockport; he visited Scotland, Ireland, Wales. He preached, lectured, talked, attended conventions, dedicated chapels, delivered addresses, visited Sunday-schools, and even went to London to celebrate a marriage between people he barely had acquaintance with, but who wanted the worthiest clergyman they knew. He saw Martineau, Tayler, Thom, the Howitts, Lady Byron, Mary Carpenter, Mrs. Gaskell, Crabb Robinson, Francis Newman, "Father" Mathew, J. D. Morell (the philosopher), Miss Dix, Mrs. Chisholm, Florence Nightingale, George Dawson, Miss Winkworth, and a great many beside. He visited picture-galleries, listened to music, wandered over the Crystal Palace, heard the reading of selections from "Uncle Tom's Cabin" at Stafford House, called on innumerable friends, conversed with manufacturers, inspected the mining districts. Some of his portraits of persons are brilliant. This of "Father" Mathew, for instance: —

Father Mathew's manner was touchingly sweet and his whole appearance pathetic, but he is sadly shattered and his powers work very languidly. He told me that his fatigues and anxieties in America broke down a constitu-

tion of iron, and there was evidently a deep sorrow and sense of unjust treatment mingled with his feeling of regret at wasted health. Yet over all spread, like a mellow sunset, a cheerful confidence that faithful service had not been in vain, and that there would come a morrow.

Or this of John James Tayler:—

There is no man in our whole denomination, in the U. S. A. or in Great Britain, whose approval I value so highly. Not equal in genius or in learning, perhaps, to Mr. Martineau or to some of our own men, there is a beautiful harmony of qualities and attainments in this wise, modest, eminently just, and loving man, which gives the greatest weight to his expressions of opinion. If I could have my way, I would make J. J. Tayler archbishop of the Unitarian communion in England. He and Mr. Martineau charmingly complete and sustain one another.

Or this of James Martineau, written after mature acquaintance:—

As a scholar and a critic he is singularly fine, delicately appreciative, keenly analyzing, penetrating. He has, too, a poetic gift of statement, and sentences drop from him at times so rich in condensed thought, so exquisitely suggestive in symbolic meaning, so faultless in finish, that they remind you of an ancient gem where the figure of a god shines from the jewel. Mr. Martineau will aid his fellows in interpreting the past and understanding their actual position; he will help to disperse fogs and delusive exaggerations, while bringing out into clearest light some recognized realities.

This of George Dawson is interesting:—

A sort of Theodore Parker or H. W. Beecher. He came out from the Baptist communion, whose general doctrines he holds to, however, and now has a free congregation here (in London) of some 1,500. He lectures much

beside, every season. He abjures sectarian theology, and gives his energies to practical religion, earnestly favoring all reform movements, somewhat in the style of various men on our side of the water.

Here is a sketch of Francis W. Newman : —

One guest, a choice friend and favorite, and who by his charming social gifts, his highly trained intellect, his lessons to the children, and his occasional lectures on art, history, and so forth, brings as much veneration and pleasure as he receives, is Francis Newman, whose "Phases of Faith" and "The Sonl" you know of. . . . When I met him first, at his own house in London, he seemed stern, careworn, depressed, and reserved; though the solemn earnestness and frank directness with which he discussed political topics, chiefly the fate of Hungary and Italy, won my admiration for his moral elevation. But now (in Wales) he was sweet, simple, gay as a child. A more transparent sincerity than his it is rare to see, and his courtesy and consideration, his deference and modesty, complete the charm. His eye is bright gray, luminous, large, with a blended penetration and softness that reminds me of Uncle William's, and there is an intensity in the whole cast of his features and expression which bespeaks high-toned enthusiasm. . . . Mr. Newman's mind is at present concentrating itself more and more on "theism" pure and simple, as the only religion fitted for mature humanity. . . . It would be doing Francis Newman injustice, however, to picture him as absorbed in theology. Far from it: he was most social, spirited, amusing, took delight like a boy in scrambling up the mountains, enjoyed intensely natural beauty, discussed with freedom and boldness all the great subjects of the day, chatted and laughed with the ladies, played pleasantly with Mrs. D——'s little grandson, and gave lessons for two hours a day to Miss D——, the only unmarried daughter, a young lady of eighteen or nineteen,

in Horace and trigonometry. He took much pleasure, too, in talks with his friend James Martineau, whom he admires greatly.

The women arouse his deepest enthusiasm. He cannot say enough of their heroism, self-denial, generosity. Here is a tribute to Mary Carpenter : —

You know, I suppose, that to her, in combination with Lady Byron and the Hon. Miss Murray, rightfully belongs the honor of originating the movement in England for juvenile reformatories ; and to Miss Carpenter chiefly is the praise due, that her writings aroused public attention to the need of such institutions. It was delightful to hear her speak with such tender and enthusiastic admiration of Lady Byron. “No one knows who has not seen it the pure goodness and wisdom of that woman. She is an angel of mercy.” Miss Carpenter impressed me as an incarnation of zealous hopefulness and compassionate sympathy. For some years she gave her time and energies to a reform school for boys at Kingswood ; but has now devoted herself entirely to a girl’s reformatory, established by her, with Lady Byron’s assistance, in Bristol.

And so on, and so on. Many pages could easily be filled with these sketches. There was not a prominent man or woman in England whom he did not see or know about. He looked at Turner’s paintings ; he read Thackeray’s novels ; he went to the house of the Brontës. There is no mention of Charles Kingsley, which is remarkable, considering his feeling about “Alton Locke,” and none of Thomas Carlyle, notwithstanding his old enthusiasm for “Sartor Resartus.” He studied, of course, the religious problem, being especially interested in the ministry of the Church to the people. The name of F. D. Maurice occurs once or twice ; the name of F. W. Robertson

once. The so-called "Catholic Apostolic Church" attracted his attention, and in one of these letters he describes at length a visit he paid to its service. After speaking of the altar, the symbols, the dresses of the priesthood, the preacher, he dwells on the ideas, — those of the present spirit, the fresh inspiration, the revived prophecy, the new unity of all believers, — and then goes on to say : —

If you ask me what, after all this somewhat extravagant and even declamatory description, is my sober judgment in regard to its pretensions, I honestly own that it seems to me, like Puseyism and the secessions to Roman Catholicism, to be one more sign of the decay of old ecclesiastical bodies, and of the universal discontent with the present death-in-life of all Christian communions. But never more than last Sunday evening have I felt that the next great era of the Church will be one where SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS will be the temple, and lives of love the worship. From creeds, and rituals, and artistic structures, and exquisite music, I turn to the house of God, in many human hearts made one by charity. Indeed, every day passed in England makes me more and more a "Socialist." It is utterly useless to attempt to galvanize the past; hideous spasmodic imitation of life is the only result. The whole of Christendom tends by irresistible attraction towards LIVING COMMUNION by universal coöperative justice. It is a mere waste of life to aim at any lower end; for this alone will give peace to the warring nations, and reconcile the conflicting sects.

This was written in December, 1854; it was equally true years later. Everything that met his eye in Great Britain confirmed his socialism. Though he pays frequent hearty and glowing tribute to the lavish generosity of the rich, laying emphasis on indi-

vidual cases (mentioning one gentleman who gave away a tenth of his large income annually, and every seven years a seventh), and manifests joy at the reported improvement of the working people, the contrast between poverty and wealth struck him painfully. Notwithstanding the alleviations, the coffee-houses in place of gin-shops, the holidays, the occasional short hours and high wages, the manly kindness, the gulf between labor and capital yawned wide. The system could not be changed. The manifold restrictions, the existence of ranks and orders, the spirit of routine, the methods of land-holding, respect for usage, worship of caste, minute, even paralyzing, division of labor, met him on all sides, and seemed to him immovable. There were free schools, charitable societies, almshouses, asylums, but every aid was felt to be vain so long as law, custom, the organization of classes, continued as they were. "One feels as when in dreams the leaden feet will not move, the imprisoned voice cannot cry out." There was power, there was virtue, but both virtue and power looked as if struggling on a wrong path. Engine and cars were detached. Scholarship did not educate the "masses," religion did not attract them; the class of peasant proprietors, the "yeomanry," had disappeared. But he had ceased to look for sudden consummations. Nothing less than an entire change in terrestrial circumstances, under divine direction, would suffice to bring about the condition he longed after. Even in Massachusetts, where nearly all restrictions were removed, where land was cheap and free on the same terms to all, where there were no class privileges, where opportunity was open to everybody, where social experiments were frequent, where new devices

were thought of and put on immediate trial, in a time of unrest and scheming, he had suffered bitter disappointments. Here was an old country, a social system comparatively ancient, a fixed tradition, a stubborn habit, and nothing to rely on except a general sense of justice, and certain moral qualities in the best people which appeared to be pledged to usages he would displace. He had simply his sublime faith to fall back upon. But this did not desert him, neither did his confidence in the future. Only the future looked further off. The magnitude and difficulty of the task were revealed, probably for the first time. A friend suggests that he may have come to believe in evolution, but he anticipated the perfect state in a generation or two, and evolution does not work so rapidly. He looked for a manifestation of divine energy, and saw in the humanitarian movements of the day signs of the providential purpose and impulses of the sovereign will. The issue was sure to arrive. The day was nearer than the most sanguine dreamed, for God had decreed it and was preparing for the final dawning; and though the process might seem tedious to us, in the sight of Him to whom a thousand years are but as one day the time was short. The following letter, written in 1871 to a devoted friend of association, explains his thought:—

16 HORNTON STREET, KENSINGTON,
LONDON W., *May 18, 1871.*

DEAR MRS. H. — Your letter dated “The Mills, April 9,” and postmarked “Boston, May 3,” reached me only last night. But this morning, my first free moments shall be given to a brief reply. For such devotedness as yours, in so grand a cause, deserves instant and hearty response. Well may you thank God for your great faith, and for

work, according to your opportunity, corresponding to that faith. Few of us can read in conscience so clear a record of consistent, brave, cheerful fidelity. And greatly will you rejoice, when your highest hopes are surpassed by the reality, hereafter! But this will not be in my day, — though possibly it may be in the future of yourself and your children. You are quite right in your assurance that none who have once beheld the “Laws of Life for a Divine Order of Society on Earth” can ever forget the glorious vision. One might as well deny that it is day, after witnessing sunrise, because clouds obscure the sky. All but fools and blind must see that in the various realms of industry, science, art, society, and religion the best energies of our whole age are converging towards one focus. That central point is the System of Graduated Distribution in Universal Unity, by the method of development. The workers, thinkers, artists, social reformers, and idealists are all at one in rejecting mechanical methods, and seeking for organic growth. The word that stirs in the bosom of the whole civilized world is “Coöperation.” A wholly new system of human Society is struggling towards birth. The agonies of the awful German-French War, and the yet more terrible woes of the civil strife between the Parisian Commune and the reactionists of the old French Régime, amidst which the honest republicans are powerless; the papal infallibility controversy, and the disestablishment of the Church movement in England; the Darwin, Spencer, Huxley, etc., discussions in the natural science department; the efforts to establish international unions of workmen, which the privileged classes themselves heartily encourage, even while dreading trade unions, etc.; and, in brief, tendencies towards order amidst the convulsions of dissolution everywhere, are but the travail throes of deliverance. “He shall come whose right it is to reign.” The glorious day of Organized “Societies throughout Humanity” draws on from dawn to noon. But while thus confidently predicting

a not distant future for the triumph of the "Combined Order of Society,"—and never was my acceptance of the principles of Association, as professed by our "Union of Associationists" in the United States of America, so uncompromising,—and while declaring to you and to all our friends that nothing could give me more joy than to reprint our grand old programme, and to bear it as a banner throughout our Republic, proclaiming it as the one true oriflamme of "Peace on Earth, Good-Will to Man," and "Glory to God in the Highest," yet my calm conviction is that we cannot hasten the season or hour. It is early morning of a bleak spring. The bloom buds will be frost-nipped and blighted. We must hopefully and patiently bide our time. Sing away, like a lark, if you like, however, and if you have a heart to do so. And be of good cheer, while heralding the noon-tide summer. It is coming. In plain words and practically, the scheme of forming small segregated communities was a mistake from its outset! We tried to bloom our buds, while the snow was still on the ground, amidst the first golden streaks of sunrise. So dear Brook Farm, beautiful blossom of Eden as it was, paled, grew brown, fell from the stalk, and left as if in mockery a pauper union! The breath of its fragrance has scented the atmosphere of our whole nation, however. But the process of forcing such blossoms is too wasteful. The fruit cannot set or ripen;—and that fruit, remember, is the immortal fruit of the Tree of Life. We do injustice to our faith by potting a small specimen twig of this tree, even if we can force it to flower. It was a heroic effort that the true Brook Farmers made, but quite too tragic a one to be repeated. It is not in my judgment wise or right to counsel other abortive efforts. To-morrow, the great civilized world will apply its organized method of joint stock ownership and enterprise to industry, education, home life, æsthetic refinements, etc., and then our Republic will for the first time begin to recognize the truth,

— that the township is the germ cell of the state, as the state is of the nation, and each nation of the grand commonwealth of humanity. The doctrine now to be preached throughout the length and breadth of the United States is this : Organize your townships ; they are not yet organized, though Providence long since pointed out the way. Begin the great work of real reformation. Organize your townships in all departments and functions. First, distribute your lands so as to insure the highest culture of the best roots, grains, fruits, stock, and animals, etc., of all kinds. Second, arrange a graduated system of coöperative industry in all branches, distributing the returns justly to labor, skill, and capital. Third, methodize your schools : gymnastic, artistic, industrial, scientific, historic, philosophic, economic, ethical, etc., — so as to insure the finest culture for every kind and degree of genius, etc., reiterating in a word all our sublime scheme, so simple, strong, and “common-sensical,” for I have no time to expand it. There is where we ought to have begun twenty-five years ago. That simple phrase, “Organize your Townships,” would by this time have regenerated the Republic. Would that our countrymen would send me forth, as one of the teachers of this urgent lesson ! “Organize your Townships.” All is involved in that. Does this discourage you ? No indeed ! Surely not. Only it counsels wise economy of effort. One of the best works, believe me, that you can just now accomplish is to carry out and complete your correspondence with the scattered Brook Farmers. Gather up their rich experiences of all kinds, economical, scientific, social, and personal. Some one will wash the gold from the sand and mint the ingot. “Blithedale Romance,” that mere shadow of a shade of the very twilight of the morning at Brook Farm, ought not to stand its only record. The truth must be told of its grand success as a college of social students, somehow.

And so with friendly greetings to all old associates and best wishes for you and yours,

Yours, sincerely,

W. H. CHANNING.

No mention is made at this period, it will be observed, of Fourier or Brisbane, of Raritan Bay or other schemes. All that is over. Pure faith alone remains, simple trust in God, and confidence in those general agencies that all joined in, whether conscious of doing so or not. The clock still struck noon, but his ears listened for the chimes from the "silver bell-fries of the sky."

The woman question absorbed him, as it had always done, as it could not but do, with his expectations of the future. The pictures of Rosa Bonheur not merely delighted him as works of art, but were welcome as heralding a new day for her sex.

I do rejoice in this proof of woman's power as an artist. It is a pledge of so much more! In literature and in art woman is now comparatively free, though in neither department are the same avenues open for education and for advancement as the commonest man may command; and I trust more and more every opportunity will be offered for women to train and use their gifts, until the world finds out what womanhood is. My hope for society turns upon this; the regeneration of the future will come from the exalting influence of woman.

The condition of women in Great Britain was extremely interesting to him. Mrs. Norton's letter to the queen on the legal disabilities of married women was "one of the most touchingly eloquent pamphlets ever printed, and which I could not read without beating heart and swimming eyes." But on this subject we need not doubt. His hope was part of the lofty faith in equality that inspired his soul.

His concern about Slavery in America becomes agonizing as years go on, and the Southern plot is developed, and he is absent. He writes to his mother, in 1856 :—

Now do not ask me not to return home. I shall die if I attempt to stay here. The sword will eat through the scabbard. 'T is all vain, — I cannot give my thoughts or energies to anything else than working with those who are striving to save the noblest nation ever yet born on this globe ; noblest, I mean, in its ideal, its form, its aim and end. Oh, surely, the wildest device that the powers of darkness ever yet perpetrated on our race was to send the slave-ship to Jamestown on the same tide that floated the Mayflower. Well ! let us then fight the fight fairly out of Ormuzd and Ahriman, Christ and Satan ; and if the wolf Fenris is indeed to devour Asgard, yet let us remember that the New World which follows that wintry deluge is to be peopled by children fed on morning dew. Live or die, dear mother mine, I feel within me, in the spirit of an indomitable hope, that I belong to that company of the little ones nourished by heavenly manna. The UNION OF FREE-MEN shall yet be a reality.

You do not seem to rate very high my fighting faculty. Well ! boasting is folly, so let us grant that it is possible I may prove wanting. I can only say I feel no faltering. My peace-principles grew out of the consciousness, which early came to me, that a very fierce and fiery nature lay at the bottom of my organization ; and, for years, I have done my best to curb and keep down that passionate temper. Perhaps if duty and right summon that restless demon into service, he may yet prove a good helper, and certainly, now, I am quite clear in conscience that the time has fully come to meet and conquer slavery. My letter to Conway expresses my deliberate conviction. We must say to the Slave-Oligarchy : “ This can go no further. Here are the alternatives : (1) you must subdue us ; (2) we will con-

quer you ; (3) if there is to be disunion, you shall go out ; (4) or else come to terms, and we will meet you more than half-way in abolishing slavery, and treat you with truest patience and magnanimity ! ” There is my political creed in a nutshell ; that creed I am to declare, and my deed shall equal it, or I will die.

In other letters the subject recurs, and always with the same intensity of utterance. From a less brave and consecrated man, the language would sound extravagant ; but in his mouth it was the expression of sincere conviction, and by no means excessive. He would die for his faith. Death seemed nothing to him, — death in battle, by the mob, by the hangman. He was ready to face suffering, to live a life of toil ; and his idea was always the same : if possible, union by mutual sacrifice for a common duty, atonement for a common guilt, friendly coöperation between North and South. If that was not practicable, why, freedom at any rate, at all hazards.

As the crisis drew near, his emotions were almost unbearable. Every letter contains an outburst, until the end came, when it was his privilege to do grand work for his country in its season of need.

Theodore Parker died on May 10, 1860. Mr. Channing was absent from Liverpool when the news came ; but on the 10th of June he preached a discourse about him in Hope Street Church, which was perhaps the noblest tribute paid to his memory. It was, indeed, a most comprehensive and appreciative sermon, warm with feeling, eloquent with praise. No one would suspect that the speaker had been ill ; nor was any apology for the discourse on the ground of incompleteness or unworthiness called for. To us it seems exuberant enough, but it did not so appear to

him, his fond imagination and friendly feeling going much further.

I will not do a single person in this assembly [he said] the injustice to suspect that idle curiosity has led him hither. I will not do injustice to the Universal Spirit by not believing that every one, whatever may be his Christian creed, whatever his law of ecclesiastical communion, will rejoice to recognize, in our brother that element of blended love and truth, which, in flowing from God, is the life of the Church through all ages.

He spoke of the MAN, the THEOLOGIAN, the REFORMER. One thing only he criticised, Parker's theology, from which he "widely dissented." But there was no sting in the fault-finding; it was broad and generous. His objection was, as we may easily conjecture, that Parker's system was one of naturalism; that it did not allow for any influence from above; that his Deity was simply immanent, not "influent;" that, consequently, "it never rose higher than a natural theology." But this criticism fills but a few pages, less than half a dozen, in a discourse of thirty, and one is fairly amazed at the generosity that could render such ardent eulogium when the discrepancy of fundamental view was so immense. His personal affection, his sense of justice, his appreciation of the spirit, the animating purpose, the ruling intention of the life, completely subordinated, not speculative differences merely, but structural divergences arising from temperament and constitution, as well as from outward circumstances. On the whole, this sermon on Parker is a signal instance of the power of intellect suffused by sentiment — for it was not mere sentiment — to surmount the barriers of creed. No one who would do full justice to W. H. Channing should

omit to read it. And this, it must be borne in mind, is a report only, a cool, printed statement of what he himself considered an "outline sketch." The following extract from a letter to Marcus Spring tells what he had in his mind : —

LIVERPOOL, *August 9, 1860.*

. . . Whether owing to fixed habits of thought and association, however, I am more intensely a United States Republican than ever, and am so vitally wrapped up in the struggling destinies of our nation that I do long to be at home, and taking active part in our grand controversy. Ah me! How terrible the tragedy of our unfaithfulness to our principles, as a people, is, alike in the actual facts and in the influence of this disloyalty upon the whole world! The history of our race has presented no such bitter disappointment of the best hope of man. I sent you by last week's steamer my notice of Theodore Parker. He never seemed to me so grand in the whole spirit, aim, and effect of his life as now. Most sublimely did he fulfill God's thought of him. In this sermon, I have studiously kept a moderate, balanced tone, for I meant that not a word should pass from my lips which would not stand the test of sober judgment, if possible; and I knew that my discourse would produce an impression on English minds very much in degree as I restrained all seeming extravagance. But this is not the sermon I should have preached if I could have shared the privilege of my friends in Boston, of bearing my testimony in the presence of those who thoroughly knew, and lovingly appreciated, Parker. You will find, however, I trust, that there is crowded into my brief talk, and veiled beneath my modest statements, a strong and full expression of our friend's principles, laws of life, aims, methods, and achievements. But how I should like to pour out with unreflecting freedom all I think and feel about our noble Great Heart! After his own order, Theodore was grand. His is one of the names which will live forever. God bless him in the highest. . . .

Mr. Thom's term of absence expired in the summer of 1857, and Mr. Channing's service at Renshaw Street naturally ended then. In the spring of the same year, Mr. Martineau was asked to move to London. In the autumn both gentlemen had enthusiastic receptions, one of welcome, the other of farewell, and Mr. Martineau's successor in Hope Street entered on his ministry there, by the hearty invitation of the society, for the remainder of the ecclesiastical year, six months and more. When that time had elapsed, the warmest, most unanimous, most considerate of requests was made that he would renew his connection for three years, with the choice of resigning his office at any time on six months' notice. After much deliberation, due entirely to the prospect of being useful at home in the struggle with slavery, he decided to stay one year. The reasons why he should accept were very strong. The congregations were large and increasing; new members were coming in; the society was united; the edifice, one of the most elegant in the sect, was in the centre of the city; the denominational position was commanding and influential; the society was composed of business men, of the middle, consequently of the more flexible, class; and the character of Mr. Martineau had given to the post an eminent distinction. His own feeling is best expressed in a letter to his mother, dated April 23, 1858:—

A franker, more generous and cordial relationship than exists between this people and me no minister need ask for. And the increased congregations, both morning and evening, are a sign that my efforts, utterly unworthy as in my own heart I feel them to be, have not been in vain. Perhaps these few words from a note of my kind friend at

"Dingle Priory," Mrs. R——, may show you how I stand in the regards of some: "That you are stirring up many hearts and minds here I cannot doubt; and that, if you remain, you may end in getting us out of the ruts, and beyond the paralysis of routine and custom, I fondly hope. Still, one feels that your country has the first claim, and that its claims must be answered first. Then again comes the thought, May not your residence here be fitting you to serve your own country more effectually, and will not a longer residence perfect the work?"

Ought I to give up such a position as this — a position of usefulness, influence, honor, independence — for an uncertain chance? . . . If I followed impulse, I should cut all loose, break up at once, bring home the family, and run my desperate risk. But ought I to do so? Am I free to do so? Without some opening at home, should I turn my back on so promising a field here? Ah, why could I not have gone to Washington!

Mr. Channing had barely completed his three years at Hope Street, and was about to take up his ministry in another part of England, when he was demanded at home by the friends of liberty. The call came to him when he was already in America. He left England with so little apprehension of disaster, or even of serious conflict, that he promised to return and take charge of the Effra Road Society (Brixton) in the autumn.

XIII.

WASHINGTON : WAR.

THIS story has been very badly told, if it has not been made apparent that Mr. Channing desired with all his heart to come home, in order to take part in the political agitation in America. In 1856 he thought seriously of establishing an independent religious society at Washington ; he hesitated to accept an invitation to Hope Street for one year, lest it might interfere with an opportunity to plant himself in his own country ; and in 1858, when the invitation to remain three years longer was given, he plainly told the committee and his personal friends that he could make no promise except on condition of resigning on a notice of six months, and could enter into no permanent arrangement until he had visited the United States, taken counsel with his advisers, and seen the situation with his own eyes. That summer he came home, was here two months, until the middle of October, traveled up and down, talked with those on whom he most relied, found no vacant place that he could occupy, was asked to preach the opening sermon before the autumnal conference of Unitarian churches, and returned to Liverpool. His position at Hope Street was so agreeable, his freedom was so entire, his friends were so many, his influence in England was already so great and so constantly enlarging, his wants, both physical and spiritual, were so abun-

dantly supplied, that he did not feel justified in leaving his post in the actual condition of affairs. He could not transport the Hope Street Church to America, and, on the whole, he felt obliged in conscience to stand by that. In the spring of 1859 the Thirteenth Congregational Society, George Ripley's old church, moved to Harrison Avenue, Boston, was about to take a new start, and his friends Clarke, Hale, King, helped to further his desire to return by trying to form a connection between him and the renewed enterprise. But the prospect was doubtful, the ties in England were multiplying, and it was becoming harder with every month to come away. Still the temptation was strong. He actually sent in his resignation, and put his acceptance of the Harrison Avenue call into the hands of his advisers. He even went so far as to propose a union between the Church of the Disciples and the Harrison Avenue Society, with a joint pastorate. But this scheme came to nothing, and he remained in Liverpool. In the summer of 1861, his second term at Hope Street having expired, he came home, alone: partly to see his mother, now old and infirm, partly to consult with his friends, partly to look at the state of the national affairs. The battle of Bull Run was fought that summer and won by the Confederates, but there was confidence that their day of triumph would be short. Yet Mr. Channing was too uneasy to go back, as he meant to do on Wednesday, September 4th. This letter to his friend J. F. Clarke reveals his mind: —

BRATTLEBORO, *August 8, 1861.*

MY DEAR JAMES, — Has no prospect presented itself of work for me at home? I frankly own, that increasing anxieties as to the future of our Republic make me most un-

willing to go abroad. We shall conquer this infernal conspiracy, for we must conquer it, or die, as a nation! But it looks to me as if there must be a terrible and protracted struggle before we can ever have peace and insured order and freedom again. No "Bull's Run Panic" has seized me. But in calm judgment I see the difficulties of our situation, as sanguine hopes prevented me from seeing them when I was in England. The contest looks thus. The Slave Oligarchy is united, unscrupulous, desperate, ably led, strongly armed, self-confident. It will strain every nerve for one tremendous rush. Walker's summons for 560,000 men is no mere bravado. The despots mean to call out every available man. They will, because they must, stake their all upon some brilliant success. We shall be very fortunate if we do not meet with new and sad reverses in Missouri, Western Virginia, on the Potomac, and in Maryland. In not one single Border State have we fairly gained the triumph yet. The nation even now is but half aroused and half in earnest, while the traitors are rapidly massing all their men and means. We ought to be gathering everywhere a large reserve; yet when Indiana offers forty-four regiments, the government is not ready to arm them! And McClellan calls for the old batteries from West Point, Troy, etc., etc.! Manifestly the struggle has but begun, and we may need twice 500,000 men, before we are out of it.

There again, is this terrible underlying and all-pervading, this central and controlling, problem of slavery. That was a grand speech by Wendell Phillips, at Abington. But though so much in the action of Congress and in the tone of the public press is encouraging, as showing the currents of popular feeling and the tendencies of the popular will, we cannot conceal from ourselves the fact that the nation is not ready to enter boldly and uncompromisingly upon an emancipation policy. The oligarchy sternly offers its alternative, — "Slavery or Death." The nation does not meet

it with "Liberty or Death." The whole world knows that a faction of slave oligarchs, for the sole end of establishing their tyranny, is seeking to destroy the Republic. But the necessity of keeping the Border States within the Union makes it seemingly impossible to exterminate the despots by sweeping into the Gulf of Mexico the very corner-stone of their power. Yet how else can the nation really conquer the oligarchy, except by proclaiming universal liberty? Thus Providence sweeps us onward to a destiny which none can foresee. We can but declare the truth, and do our best, and wait. I feel, very presumptuously doubtless, as if I could settle this matter in a month. But no man's theories and plans will serve. The Overruler alone sits on his judgment-seat to-day, and we can but submit. Our whole position is as perplexed and entangled as it can well be.

Then finally comes in the impending probability of trouble with Great Britain. I do not doubt the good feeling, sympathy, and friendly hopes of the nation at large. But the party in the commercial and industrial world is very strong that favors the "secessionists;" the claims of instant necessity are urgent; the pretext for neutrality will give way presently to the pretext of equal justice to each contestant; thence recognition of the "Confederates"! A few more successes, following the "Manassas victory," will give the very chance the leaders crave for enforcing their claims upon the British government. Without anticipating actual war with Great Britain, there does seem to be a probability of seriously unfriendly relations, which may end in collisions, by sea and on the frontier. There hangs the balance of neutrality! A grand success would turn the scales decidedly in our favor. But Palmerston can at any moment "put his foot in it," and weigh anything he wills on the side of the Confederates. The news of further reinforcements for Canada presents anything but an agreeable prospect for American patriots in England.

Thus, then, the matters look to me. How do influential men in Massachusetts regard the situation? What says Governor A.? How do the "knowing ones" think things are moving? What are the energetic business men doing? Some way or other, I must decide on my future plans promptly. With hearty best wishes for your home circle,

Yours, faithfully,

W. H. CHANNING.

Soon after writing in this strain he went down to Washington to judge for himself of the situation, and saw enough to justify his worst apprehensions. He received an invitation to remain as pastor of the Unitarian society, released himself from his English engagement, and in October accepted the call, which he regarded as a command of Providence. He stayed in Washington. The conflict, long anticipated, had come. In 1856, while minister of the Renshaw Street Chapel, Liverpool, he had spoken on the subject of American slavery, and predicted that in four, or at the most eight, years the system would be abolished by an act of mutual sacrifice. A year later he laid emphasis on the close relations which existed between Great Britain and the United States. But the story of his noble service shall be told in his own words, Dr. Francis H. Brown, who has just prepared an elaborate Roll of Honor for Harvard College, having most kindly placed at my disposal an account of Mr. Channing's work, written by himself expressly for Dr. Brown's book: —

OUTLINE OF SERVICES DURING THE WAR FOR FREEDOM AND UNION, BY WILLIAM HENRY CHANNING.

ENGLISH EXPERIENCES.

Mr. Channing "enlisted for the War of Freedom and Union against the Slave Oligarchy" from the date of Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency, November, 1860, and the secession of the slave-holding States, during the death-agony of Buchanan's shameful administration. Living at that trying period in Liverpool, where Consul Beverly Tucker's specious sophistries, and the unscrupulous intrigues of Confederate agents had bewildered the judgment and perplexed the consciences of commercial and political leaders, he found himself called on to "nail the nation's flag to the mast-head," and to carry on a continual controversy, in public and in private, against all advocates of the rightfulness of "Secession by the Slave-holding States," and to maintain the duty of the Republic to crush the "conspiracy of the slave-power." In this moral battle, incessantly waged from November, 1860, to June, 1861, Mr. Channing found strong supporters among his Liverpool associates, to two of whom, Charles Edward Rawling, Esq., and Col. Robert Trimble, both earnest and well-informed defenders of our free and constitutional government, his special thanks were due. And to the Hon. W. E. Forster, with whom he was in correspondence, and who, in his judgment, more effectually hindered the recognition of the slave-holders' confederacy than any other British statesman, he felt that our nation could never make too grateful a return. Mr. Channing's final service, before leaving England in June, 1861, was to deliver an address of two hours in length, exposing from their own speeches in Congress, their state ordinances, the resolutions of their Conventions, and the Southern press generally, the atrocious plot of the slave-holders to break up the Republic of

the United States, and to found upon its ruins a vast Slave Empire. The hall in which this address was delivered was crowded to overflowing, and the impression produced was deep, for the time. At the request of friends it was printed in a pamphlet and widely circulated. [This is an altogether too summary notice of a most remarkable address, perhaps the most exhaustive arraignment of the southern policy delivered in England, and calculated by its telling quotations, statistics, facts, reasonings, to move the popular mind. It must have produced a great effect on the general public. There is no need of saying that it was impassioned and eloquent. But that it should have been so massive, simple, direct, is a wonder. It is worth remembering that this address was given in Lancashire, and in the chief sea-port town of England.] Subsequently, in 1863, he did the same service in Leeds, Manchester, Edinburgh, and other cities. In fact, his influence was very great in England. And with this testimony to the righteousness of our national cause, and an unfaltering prophecy that the slave-system would be annihilated and the Republic of United Freemen reëstablished in its complete integrity, Mr. Channing bade farewell to his family and English friends, and took passage for his native land, confidently expecting to return in three months, to enter upon a new ministry in Brixton, London, whither a welcome invitation had called him. He little foresaw how swiftly coming events were to prolong those "three months" into "four years."

BULL RUN AND ITS RESULTS.

On his arrival in America, after a brief visit to his aged mother and other relatives, Mr. Channing placed himself in communication with his best informed political friends, such as Senators Charles Sumner and Henry Wilson, and Governor Andrew, etc., and learned from them that they nowise indorsed Mr. Seward's sanguine predictions "that the Rebellion would collapse in three months," though they

expressed no doubt as to the final issue of the desperate struggle which they anticipated. Probably no one, however, even dimly foresaw the tremendous trial permitted by Providence, as the most equitable means of training our nation for universal and impartial liberty and fraternity, which was speedily to fall upon us like the judgment day of the Republic. Certainly Mr. Channing did not, for at the very time when the battle of Bull Run was at its height he was preaching from the pulpit of his friend James Freeman Clarke, in Boston, a sermon of cheering augury from the text of Isaiah, "Violence shall no more be heard in your land. . . . For ye shall call your walls salvation and your gates praise." Next morning, early, came the dismal tidings which filled our hearts with mingled grief, shame, and stern resolve to pledge all, at whatever cost, for freedom and union, one and indissoluble, throughout the length and breadth of the Republic. And before he sought rest that night, Mr. Channing learned that for him too, as for hundreds of thousands of our countrymen, all aims, plans, and destiny were to be suddenly transformed. For it was clear to his conscience and judgment, as it was to his will, that the "nearest duty" must be to live, and if need be to die, for the nation henceforth, till the work given by God was thoroughly done by establishing peace, through equity and brotherly kindness, from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.

MINISTRY IN WASHINGTON.

The Fast appointed by President Lincoln, in solemn memorial of the disaster at Bull Run, was the occasion of Mr. Channing's first visit to the capital. For, receiving and instantly accepting an invitation from the Unitarian society there to conduct the services and preach on that day, he took the opportunity, with unreserved sincerity, to lay bare the real causes, the true significance, and the only righteous issue of the Civil War, forced upon the Republic by the

slave oligarchy. And on the following Sunday he opened his conscience and poured out his heart on the "Duties of Christian patriots" at such a crisis, in words of unwavering confidence and hope. He little anticipated that a discourse of such uncompromising frankness would lead to his settlement in a city filled with half sympathizers, to say the least, with the slave-holders. So when, to his surprise, a call came from the Unitarian congregation to be their minister, he felt as if he was summoned by Providence to do his best, in this allotted sphere, for our Republic. But the difficulties in the way were serious. For his resignation was to be sent to his friends in Brixton, and arrangements were to be made for his family, who were detained in England by the fact that his son had but lately entered upon his course of training in the University of Oxford. The path of right, however, grew plainer day by day; and it appeared but a privilege to make such slight sacrifices as might be called for, in behalf of our much-tried nation. So returning to the North for a few weeks of consultation with his friends, he sundered his new-formed ties with the Brixton congregation, and committing his family in trust to the ever faithful Father, he gladly hastened back to his appointed sphere of patriotic duty in Washington.

THE SANITARY COMMISSION.

The ill-conceived and worse executed expedition to Ball's Bluff, October, 1861, involving as it did the causeless massacre of the heroic Baker and the brave boys of the "Old Bay State" with William Putnam at their head, was the first sight of the horrors of war for Mr. Channing. Thenceforward, during the following autumn and winter, when the dreadful nightmare of inert immobility paralyzed the splendid army of the Potomac, and the intrigues of political time-servers chilled the very heart of the Republic, while the pitiless rains and muddy quagmires sickened in their ill-provided camps our impatient soldiers, it was his sad

satisfaction, under the guidance of his friend, the devoted and energetic Frederic Knapp, to aid, as other duties permitted, in the admirably arranged ministrations of the Sanitary Commission. His earliest services were rendered to the magnificent regiment of Michigan Sharpshooters, decimated by the black measles. And terrible beyond words to tell it was to witness the deaths of this band of picked men, who had left homes, wives, children, all, at a moment's summons, to serve their country on the battle-field, but who now were breathing their last, pent up, shivering and wet, in their canvas tents, like a flock of sheep struck down by frost. "Will the army never move? Cannot the President command his Generals to get us out of this?" was the dying cry. Mr. Channing visited frequently, also, the large Patent Office Hospital, where his honored friend, Miss D. L. Dix, found a fit field of work for her unwearying energies. And here it was his good fortune to induce Mrs. Frances Kemble to cheer the patients by her admirable readings from Shakespeare, Whittier, etc., to their great delight and refreshment. But he was not engaged in regular Hospital Service till the tragic era of the abortive Peninsular Campaign crowded the capital with sick and wounded heroes. Then came the opportunity.

THE UNITARIAN CHURCH HOSPITAL.

All who were in Washington during the appalling period of the "Change of Base" and the "Seven Days' Battles" will recall, like a delirious dream, the scenes enacted in the capital, — when boat-load after boat-load of disabled and invalided soldiers were each day arriving, without fit homes to shelter, feed, and heal them in. The indomitable Secretary of War, etc., etc., did wonders; but the demands went beyond the possibilities of immediate supply. Houses were confiscated, wooden hospital buildings were run up, public offices were appropriated. But still there was no sufficient

room. And then, at Mr. Channing's suggestion, and with the instant and hearty concurrence of the Committee, the Unitarian society proffered the use of their church for a hospital to the government. The offer was most gratefully accepted by Mr. Stanton, and the building instantly prepared by boarding over the pews, and making other necessary arrangements for the reception of inmates. And from that time forward, the members of the congregation, and preëminently the ladies, devoted themselves, as volunteer nurses, to the care of the sick and wounded soldiers, with a zeal and constancy beyond praise. During the whole time of Pope's most gallant but ill-supported campaign in defense of Washington, and till after the battle of Antietam, the church was occupied. And the Senate of the United States of America, in proof of their high appreciation of the generous patriotism of the Unitarian society, offered them the use of their splendid chamber in the Capitol as a place of worship until the adjournment of Congress. And after the whole Capital itself was converted into one vast hospital, they found a place of meeting in "Willard's Hall," till the church should again be free. During that disheartening autumn, Mr. Channing found an ever-widening sphere of ministerial and sanitary labor, not only in the hospitals of the city, but of the outlying districts all around Washington.

STANTON HOSPITAL.

At length, after frequent applications, Mr. C. obtained a commission of chaplain for regular and constant service, when the new, large wooden hospital, named after the Secretary of War, was opened, and continued in service there till the close of the war and the dispersion of our armies in the summer of 1865. The experience of those eventful months and years would fill a volume, and no attempt to sketch an outline even of their intensely interesting lessons of life can here be made. Suffice it to say that

this close intimacy with our wounded, fever-stricken, disabled, but never discouraged nor demoralized "Boys in Blue," served only to deepen immeasurably his reverent admiration for the heroic qualities of the American soldier, and his firm confidence in the free institutions under whose influence so magnanimous, intelligent, high-hearted, loyal, and religiously devoted a race of patriots had been formed. Selfish, frivolous, cowardly, mean men there were in their large companies, as a matter of course. But the temper and spirit of the vast majority of our "rank and file" were simply grand. And chapter after chapter might be filled with narratives illustrating their noble traits. During this long period of service, also, Mr. Channing was brought frequently into close acquaintance with the Confederate wounded prisoners, whom he invariably treated with impartial fraternal sympathy. And he was gratified, as much as he was surprised, to find what a single-hearted, well-meaning, honest, and kindly, though ignorant and prejudiced body of men a large proportion of these soldiers were whom the slave oligarchy had forced, lured, and betrayed into being their tools and victims. And such experiences but served to set in more glaring light the hideous barbarities of the "Slave-holders' Rebellion."

BATTLE-FIELD.

Mr. Channing had three times the privilege of visiting battle-fields, and helping to nurse our wounded heroes. His first service "at the front" was at the close of General Burnside's most courageous but unsupported attack on the Confederate lines at Fredericksburg. Here he first came into coöperation with the heroic, devoted, and indefatigable Helen Gilson, in the large tent-hospital behind Sumner's headquarters at Falmouth. The weather was bitterly cold, and the patients suffered sadly. But every effort was made by a large staff of nurses, aided by the Sanitary Commission, to alleviate their miseries. He returned with a boat-load to Washington.

Again, on the first day of Hooker's disastrous and ill-managed advance to Chancellorsville, he went down to Fredericksburg as agent of the Sanitary Commission, and reached there soon after Sedgwick had carried Marye's Heights and was passing on to support Hooker. That afternoon and night, when General Lee threw Early's, Hay's, and Barksdale's commands upon the Plank Road to check the victorious advance of our left wing, Mr. Channing was incessantly occupied till daybreak in the Sunday-school-rooms of the Presbyterian Church, in attending to the wounded men brought in by the ambulances. The morning was devoted to removing the hospital patients across the Rappahannock, and the next night was passed by him in the hospital close beside the pontoon bridge over the Rappahannock. About sundown he was witness of the desperate struggle on Salem Heights; removed the next morning with a train of wounded to Potomac Creek. There he remained for a few days at the Sanitary Commission Relief store-house, carrying supplies to the ambulance trains and hospitals, and finally took charge of a boat crammed full on each deck with wounded men, from Acquia Creek to Washington, — a night of horrors.

For the third time he visited Fredericksburg, on the day of the tremendous Battle of the Wilderness, and found the streets and sidewalks strewn with wounded men. His station was at the Rowe House, on the plain beneath Marye's Heights, where the agents of the Sanitary Commission had established their depot of stores. And here he remained, ministering to the sufferers at Marye's Heights Hospital, and attending on the ambulance trains arriving at all hours from daybreak to midnight, until Fredericksburg was evacuated in consequence of General Grant's rapid advance to Spottsylvania, Cold Harbor, etc., when once more he returned with a long train and a boat-load of the wounded to the capital; and when, owing to the presence of several Sanitary Commission agents, the night passed in comparative comfort.

CHAPLAIN OF CONGRESS.

Early in the winter of 1863-4 Mr. Channing was greatly surprised, on returning home from Stanton Hospital, to find two members of the House of Representatives awaiting him in his rooms. They greeted him with the announcement that he had just been elected chaplain. But how came such an unlooked-for event to pass? "Why! Bishop —— had been proposed as candidate, and his nomination strongly urged. But he was so notoriously a sympathizer that the question instantly arose, Who best represents the antislavery policy of the Republican party in Washington? So we chose you." Under such conditions, unwilling as he was to add to the labors which already burdened him, Mr. Channing felt that he was not free to decline the office, and entered at once upon his new duties. Three resolutions, however, he took as vows solemnly recorded, in accepting the responsible trust. The first was that as a Unitarian, and so the representative of one of the smallest denominations in the nation, he would invite leading men of every communion to conduct the services and preach in the People's Church. This was done with entire success. The second resolve was that a colored minister should stand on the speaker's platform, and by that practical illustration demonstrate that one central principle of the War for Freedom and Union was to prove that "in Christ" all disciples are alike free, and that all God's children, black and white, are peers in the Father's House. This vow was fulfilled by welcoming Rev. Henry Highland Garnett and his colored choir to conduct the services, on one Sunday, in the Hall of Representatives. On that occasion, the immense audience room was crowded to the roof, and every aisle was full. The sermon was most eloquent, the singing was admirable, and the whole scene was most inspiring with cheerful auguries. The third vow was that a woman's voice should give utterance to the con-

science of the mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters of the heroes who were risking life and all they held dearest in behalf of the liberties and equal laws of the Republic. And this resolve was accomplished when the honored Quaker prophetess, Mrs. Rachel Howland, of New Bedford, Mass., was providentially led to visit the seat of the National Government on a mission, and requested from the Chaplain of the House of Representatives the opportunity to address our legislators upon their duties as Christian citizens. On this occasion, Mr. Channing felt as if Heaven granted to the full his prayer; and he took part with his venerated sister in the services with deepest gratitude and joy. The hall was filled to overflow with an earnest and responsive audience, and the most skeptical questioner as to the "proper sphere of woman," in listening to the silvery music of the preacher's voice, as she poured out what was to her the "message of a divine oracle," could not but recognize that the "Witness of the Spirit" was authorized from above to declare the counsels of the All Just to the leaders of the people, in their central national church.

During the period of his chaplaincy, Mr. Channing found his best powers tasked in a threefold ministry; to his own special congregation in the Unitarian church, to the soldiers sick and wounded in Stanton Hospital, and to the large assemblies gathered Sunday by Sunday in the Hall of Representatives. But the cordial support of Republican statesmen and of his brethren in the ministry, and a blessing from Heaven, enabled him cheerfully to pass through this privileged season of labor in an hour when they were freest who most faithfully could serve the commonwealth.

FREEDMEN'S AID SOCIETY.

As the armies of the Republic moved forward, especially during the Peninsular Campaigns and General Grant's advance to Richmond, the numbers of fugitives from slav-

ery accumulated so rapidly in and around the capital that the resources of the government were tasked to feed, clothe, and house the ever-increasing host of outcasts; and to supply and distribute necessities and comforts, guidance and control, for these helpless classes, unaccustomed to self-dependence, became a most difficult and trying duty. For the end of aiding the war department, therefore, a "Freedmen's Relief Union" was organized in Washington, which soon became the central agent for diffusing among the needy refugees the stores supplied by the ever liberal beneficence of the Free States. Of this Union Mr. Channing was a member from its early organization, and at length became one of its vice-presidents and then its president. And the complicated cares and onerous duties thrown upon this society may be judged of by stating the fact that at one period some ten thousand freedmen were more or less dependent upon the government and the Relief Union for their maintenance and direction. Mr. Channing took an active part by consultation with his friend, Mr. Eliot, of Massachusetts, and other Republican statesmen in the organization of the "Freedmen's Bureau." He was also one of the executive committee for the management of the school fund, which has since been so judiciously employed by his friends, Geo. E. Baker and Sayles J. Bowen, in the establishment of the well-known Miner Normal School of Washington.

MISSION TO ENGLAND.

In August, 1863, when the crowning victories of Gettysburg and Vicksburg roused cheerful hopes of reëstablished peace, Mr. Channing, whose health had been impaired by constant service, obtained two months' "leave of absence" from his hospital duties, — where his great-hearted and unflagging friend, James Richardson, more than replaced his offices, — and took passage across the Atlantic at once to visit his family, and to give public addresses on the pros-

pects of the restored Republic ; and after a short rest with his wife and children amidst the picturesque scenery of Church-Stretton and its neighborhood, set off on a lecturing tour to Bristol, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Leeds, etc. At this last-named city, it was his happiness to take part with Hon. W. E. Forster in an immense meeting filling the large Town Hall, which had been organized by that zealous friend of universal freedom, Joseph Lupton, Esq. Mr. Forster's masterly speech, fully reported in the London "Times" and the provincial papers, was a magnanimous testimony to the righteousness of the war for freedom and union, and was one of the ablest and most telling appeals made in behalf of our Republic during the struggle. The news of the battle of Chickamauga, so sadly revealing that the bitter woes of the civil war were to be reopened and multiplied, recalled Mr. Channing to his post of duty. And in the steamer on his return, he met with seven sea-captains whose ships had been driven from the ocean by the pirate Alabama and her abettors, against whose remorseless outrages Messrs. Forster, Bright, Cobden, the Duke of Argyll, and their generous compeers were then so fervently protesting.

THE UNION LEAGUE.

On reaching Washington again, Mr. Channing was strongly urged to join the Union League. And knowing full well that the capital was crowded with traitors, spies, and half-hearted Unionists, strong as his convictions had always been against secret societies in a Republic, he consented. He was at once elected Chaplain of one of its lodges, and took an active part in its deliberations and active plans for thwarting the intrigues of the Washington Secessionists. It never yet has been fully realized that the national government was, from first to last, in constant peril of being betrayed into the hands of the foes of the Republic by seemingly quiet citizens who were often receiv-

ing their daily livelihood from the very administration on whose policy they were the spies. How threatening this danger was appeared plainly enough at the period of General Early's dashing and all but successful raid into Maryland in July, 1864, when, after his defeat of Wallace on the Monocacy, he actually advanced to within six miles of the capital on the ever-to-be-remembered Sunday of July 9th, when, if he had but known the weakness of the national lines, he might in all probability have occupied the seat of government, long enough, at least, to have done irreparable injury and sadly to have impaired the prestige of the Republic. In that crisis, it was evident that if the Confederates had but once succeeded in breaking through our thin defenses, there were hundreds and thousands of traitors within, waiting and eager to help in the work of destruction. So on Monday, the 10th, the Union League held a session, drew up rolls of those prepared to march out to the forts, and agreed upon a plan to sound the tocsin of alarm, in case of need, from the church towers by ringing the bells. And Mr. Channing, with the faithful sexton of the Unitarian church, took his post in their belfry, waiting for the signal. It will be remembered how the timely arrival of the "Old Sixth Corps," dispatched from Norfolk by General Grant just in season, averted that impending peril, and how, when at sunset of Monday, the 10th, Early at length advanced, his regiments were repulsed by Wright's sturdy veterans and scattered in swift retreat.

THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

On the 4th of March, 1865, when Mr. Lincoln, in the grand eastern portico of the Capitol, with the sunshine breaking from a cloud, and falling on his head like a crown of light, in the presence of a vast assembly, where white and colored troops were ranked shoulder to shoulder, and where freedmen in their rough plantation garments stood side by side with fashionably attired citizens from the Free

States, spoke the sublimely simple, touchingly humble, yet prophetically hopeful words of his second inaugural, — words never to be forgotten so long as English is a living tongue — it was Mr. Channing's privilege, as the Chaplain of the House of Representatives, to stand near enough to catch every syllable. Again he heard "dear Father Abraham," as our people loved to call him, announce to the crowd around the White House, from a small window in the second story, the good news of peace. And finally, he took his appropriate part with the mourning company who, a few days after that farewell benediction for a redeemed Republic, paid the last rites of reverence to the patriot, who had died as the victim of the slave power's ruthless vengeance, to the saviour of a ransomed race who had given his life in sacrifice to secure the liberties of every fellow-countryman, however downcast and lowly, "with malice for none, with charity for all." And now the heaven-allotted recompense for wrong was paid, and the rule of right was reëstablished, at least in promise, throughout the Republic. On May 22d and 23d Mr. Channing rejoiced with the grateful hosts who greeted with acclaim the two hundred thousand war-worn, victorious veterans of Grant and Sherman, as with tattered banners, hung with green and flowery garlands, they passed in magnificent review through the capital of the nation, which they had fought and bled to reconcile. And then, our citizen soldiers disbanded to return to peaceful avocations, and our sick and wounded heroes safely deposited in happy homes, we could all respond to our martyred President's majestic vows offered above the graves of our brothers at Gettysburg: "Here let us resolve that they shall not have died in vain; that this nation shall under God have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish forever from the earth."

This modest story, so briefly sketched, needs to be filled out in details in order to bring into relief this

man's extraordinary devotion. The many full and deeply interesting letters which he wrote to his wife in England are not drawn upon at all, as they may be published separately. They are too long for insertion here, and ought not to be mutilated. They are important as a record of heroism during the war, — heroism on the part of the man and of the helpers. Probably there is no similar record extant.

There were, as he says, three sets of duties undertaken by him: his duty to the Unitarian society, of which he was pastor; to the House of Representatives, of which he was chaplain; and to the wounded soldiers, of whom he was friend. Any one of these might, under existing circumstances, have afforded occupation for a diligent man.

The Unitarian church had never been large, strong, or influential. It had always required nursing. The best preachers in the denomination had gone there, and had met with a temporary success, but had left no permanent mark. The meeting-house was unattractive from its position and its appearance. The membership was not distinguished by wealth or fashionable eminence. The city of Washington was a political centre, with charming social accompaniments. The politicians cared little about religion, religious doctrines or institutions. Society liked an external form of faith, an established creed, a demonstrative and even showy ceremonial. The sentiment of the town was conservative, averse to freedom of speech, boldness of thought, or aggressiveness of conviction. Five or six years before Mr. Channing came there, since the impassioned discussion of the slavery question, the church had been to a large extent dismembered, scattered, and broken. The building, poor as

it was, became almost untenable for want of repairs ; the resources were very low. Financially, the congregation was in no condition to offer a pastor anything like an adequate support. " I confess," Mr. Channing says, " I had no conception of how utterly broken up this congregation was." But gradually the rents were closed up, the church was united again, the scattered flock was regathered, hope revived, " and the prospect is fair for a complete success." This was, no doubt, in great measure, due to the immense strides antislavery feeling at the North had taken since the outbreak of the war, to the rage against the Secessionists, and to the universal prevalence of political discussion. An eloquent voice was doubly eloquent when speaking for freedom. It was expected that the preacher would be a patriot, that religion would support the state. To be a Unionist was to be an antislavery man, and to be a Unionist was demanded.

So sudden, violent, wholesale, was this conversion that in 1861 the most popular speaker in a course of lectures given at the Smithsonian Institution was George B. Cheever, the famous abolition preacher of New York. This is Mr. Channing's account of the demonstration : —

I have rarely seen an audience more completely magnetized by a speaker than the crowded assembly in the Smithsonian were, last Friday, by Cheever. Almost every sentence elicited applause, and several times the heartiest cheers broke forth irrepressibly. Yesterday, also, he preached to an assembly of two thousand and upwards in the Hall of Representatives, thrilling his auditors with his trumpet calls to action. Verily, this service was a coming up to the Mount of Sinai, that burned with fire, and to

blackness and darkness and tempest, terrible in its consuming justice. And when, at the close, the Hutchinsons sang the plaintive Prayer of the Fugitive Slave, and the vast multitude burst out in one tumultuous acclamation, it was startling to think of the utter transformation wrought by one year's tremendous experience.

Yet this enthusiasm did not last beyond the passions of the war. Dr. Cheever's marble church stood where Tiffany's store now stands, having been sold because the society could not afford to hold it, — so little fellow-feeling was entertained towards the black man ; and when Mr. Channing's ministry ended his parish lapsed again into the comparative torpor from which he had roused it.

But the ministry itself, quite apart from its patriotic aspect, was absolutely faithful. As a pastor he was a true friend, counselor, comforter ; believing cordially in the richness and the eternal significance of life, welcoming the infants who were born into it, and bidding a radiant "farewell till to-morrow" to those leaving it. As a preacher he proclaimed a broad, free, spiritual gospel, a message of hope and good cheer to all humanity. Those who got nearest to him loved him best. He had the blessing of the poor, the perishing, the sick, the sorrowful, the obscure, and those whose trust was dim. He never doubted ; he never was afraid. He met disappointment and discomfiture with a smile. His faith in God was for all occasions ; his faith in the spiritual possibilities of man never grew faint ; his faith in immortality was simply unwavering ; his presence never failed to bring light and love into the household ; and he was always present in time of need. He never

spared himself, or put himself foremost, but thought of others.

In regard to his service as Chaplain of the House of Representatives, little can be added to what he has said. There is this, however, to be noted. He regarded this as the people's church. It was not Unitarian, or Universalist, or Baptist, or Methodist, or sectarian in any kind. He was chosen simply because he had antislavery principles, and any believer with those principles had a right to speak there on Sundays. His letters show what pains he was at to procure eminent men of other denominations to occupy the place, — Dr. Breckinridge of Kentucky, Dr. Cheever of New York, Bishop Simpson, Mr. Aaron, a Baptist, from New Jersey, were invited. His own friends took what was left, and he himself was in the background. An ordinary man would have confined his duty within the routine of the office. But he was not a man of routine. He ever put a large interpretation on his ordained function, idealized it, so to say, and then endeavored to act out his conception. In this case, his convictions touching popular liberty as he apprehended it were the guide of his conduct, and any criticisms on that conduct must refer back to the purpose that prompted it, to his conception of liberty. Of the popularity or unpopularity of his course he did not consider for a moment. Could he act with a good conscience? That was his determining question. When he could answer that to his satisfaction, he was content; not before. In his own efforts he reflected, so far as he could, the Northern sentiment, doing his best to kindle the love of freedom, to awaken the highest moral feelings, to stimulate the passion for humanity, and to make clear the providence of

God. Everything that was specifically Unitarian was avoided, and those large views were offered in which all Christians could share.

This service to the wounded soldiers, in which a great deal of personal emotion was mingled with work for the Sanitary Commission, can be thoroughly known only through the reading of letters which cannot be printed here, but an idea of it can be formed from one or two incidents, reported either by himself to friends or by observers. The greater part of the summer he was in the hospitals, sometimes all summer, and those who know what the heat of Washington is in summer, and what hospitals must be, can form some conception of the labor. The hours of rest were hours of sharp thought, for he could not throw the problem off his mind, or relieve his soul from responsibility. On May 1, 1864, he writes to his constant friend and steadfast ally, J. F. Clarke, with whom he was in intimate correspondence :—

Beds for 15,000, in addition to the tens of thousands we have already, have been ordered in our hospitals! Ah! loving Heavenly Father, must there be all this hideous butchery ere our sins can be washed white as wool? To-day is the anniversary of Chancellorsville. A year ago, at this time, I was among the wounded in Fredericksburg. It was Sunday, May 3d, at church time, that the heights were stormed. It was just at sundown that the awful volleys came rattling and thundering in our ears, telling us of Sedgwick's check, some two miles along the Plank Road; and during all that night, staggering between companions, heaped in ambulances, or borne on stretchers, the maimed and bloody victims of that sudden and overwhelming attack came in, until every spot on the floors and benches of our temporary hospitals was covered. To-day I am haunted

by these memories. Again I hear the parting messages sighed out with such pathetic sweetness ; again I see the calm, still faces, as the flaring candle, borne on a bayonet, gleams across the waxen features, sleeping the sleep that no morning dawn can waken ! My pass is ready at the Sanitary office, now, if we are needed again. Well ! well ! It must be, and I have long since given up the hopeless effort to fathom with petty plumb-line the profound abyss of Providence.

The following "Incident of the War" was communicated to the "Christian Register" of February 12, 1885, by General J. F. B. Marshall : —

The brief allusion at his funeral to the hospital service of Rev. William H. Channing during the Civil War recalls to my mind an incident which may be of interest.

After the bloody battles of the Wilderness, May 5, 6, and 7, 1864, the city of Fredericksburg was occupied as one vast hospital camp, crowded with the wounded, for whom it was impossible to provide suitable accommodations or proper care. The city had been alternately occupied by the Union and Rebel forces, and what little had been spared by one had been destroyed by the other. Buildings of all kinds were taken possession of. The pews of the churches were torn out for fuel and the floors covered with the wounded. Urgent calls for volunteers for the work of the Sanitary and Christian Commissions were sent north, and quickly responded to. Receiving leave of absence from Governor Andrew, who sent Edward P. Bond to relieve me of my duties at Washington, I hastened with Mrs. M. to Fredericksburg, and reported to Hon. Frank B. Fay, in charge of the Auxiliary Field Relief Corps of the Sanitary Commission, and was assigned to the charge of the Ninth Corps Hospital, in the outskirts of the city, on the memorable Marye's Heights, the scene of Burnside's bloody repulse, where Chaplain Fuller gave up his life. We took posses-

sion of every building that offered a shelter within a radius of half a mile from Marye's large mansion, which was the central hospital. Every building, including attics, sheds, porticoes, and out-houses, was speedily filled with the wounded, who were laid on bare floors or the earth, without beds, blankets, or pillows, except the boughs and leaves which some of us found time to gather for a few of the worst cases. Without conveniences (not even a cook-stove to be had at first) and with limited supplies, our handful of workers began the hopeless task of caring for this multitude of helpless sufferers.

Among those who hastened to Fredericksburg in response to the call for nurses was Mr. Channing. He was assigned by Mr. Fay to my corps, came out at once, and reported for duty. The only resting-place we could offer him, after the rough, exhausting journey, was among the boxes and barrels of a small store-room or pantry, filled with hospital stores, among which were rank hams and odorous salt-fish, on the floor of which we had thrown an old and not over-clean feather-bed, which had been found in the house. Even this cramped and unsavory lair had to be shared by a bedfellow, William Howell Reed, our right-hand man and most efficient and indefatigable worker. But a chamber in a palace could not have been more cheerfully accepted, as, coiling his legs among the barrels, Mr. Channing lay down for the rest that he needed to prepare him for the arduous work before him.

The day before his arrival there had passed through our crowded camp a column of sixteen thousand fresh troops who had been garrisoning the Washington fortifications, and were now hurrying to the front in response to Grant's call for reinforcements. At the same time, a large body of prisoners, captured at Spottsylvania, was passing to the rear. The contrast between these gaunt and haggard but wiry-looking rebels, with their escort of bronzed veterans, and these ruddy-faced troops who had not seen active ser-

vice, with their bright uniforms and burnished weapons ornamented with the flowers which had been thrown to them as they passed through Washington, was most striking. But we were soon to see another still more vivid contrast.

Within six miles of our hospital camp, these fresh troops were surprised by an attack from Ewell's Corps, which was making a *détour* in Grant's rear to capture his wagon trains. In less than twenty-four hours from the time these men marched with elastic step through our camp, a train of ambulances slowly returned with five hundred of them, wounded in that sharp engagement. After jolting over the rough streets of the city, only to find every spot filled with wounded, the train returned to Marye's Heights, and was parked in an open plowed field, opposite the main building of our hospital. From Mr. Reed's "*Hospital Life*" I quote his graphic description of the scenes which followed :

"Within twenty-four hours five hundred men were brought back, bleeding, wounded, dead, or dying, some of them carrying in their breasts the same roses, scarcely faded, and now stained with blood. The camp for the night was settled at dark ; the drivers had lain down to rest ; the fires were blazing brightly ; while the moon, half obscured in the smoke of those tremendous battles, shone out red and lurid upon the field, lighting it up for our ministries to those who were in the agonies of death. We were almost overwhelmed by the accumulated work which every hour seemed to be bringing to us. Here was this vast addition to our numbers. The dead to be taken out and buried ; five hundred wounds to be bathed and dressed, five hundred men to be washed and fed, and but our little company of aids, already wearied by an arduous day's work, to do it ! We visited every ambulance, carrying out those who had died to an adjoining field, where they were laid side by side. In the mean time, our kitchen was taxed to its utmost capacity in preparing nourishment ; and before midnight every man had an ample supper, such as we could hastily prepare.

Our work went on. With basins, sponges, bandages, and lint, and with clear spring water, we went from ambulance to ambulance, bathing, cleansing, soothing wounds which were yet fresh and open, and some so ghastly as to make us almost faint.

“Under one of the ambulances we found a lad dreadfully wounded in the back. His sufferings were such that he prayed that he might die. Rev. William H. Channing, who was of our party, with that lightning-flash of sympathy which was characteristic of all his service in the field, drew from the lad his story, got his father’s address, and spoke to him of his critical condition. ‘My boy,’ said he, ‘do you know what it is to pray that you may die?’ ‘Ah, yes! for death will bring me so much peace. Will you baptize me here? I shall feel better then, for father always wanted me to be baptized.’ So in that rough, open field, on our knees under the ambulance, the poor boy was received into Christ’s Church on earth, into the real communion of which he was so soon to enter in heaven. In no prayer or service of such profound solemnity had I ever joined; and the promise was made real in that night experience, if it was ever fulfilled, that ‘where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.’”

At daylight, we were on the field again with fresh water, crackers, milk punch, and coffee, to give all the refreshment we could before starting them over those terrible roads between Fredericksburg and Belle Plain. The dead were now to be buried. With two spades, we began to make the trench into which they were to be laid; and when it was finished, the blanket coverings were removed, and Mr. Channing stood on the embankment and commenced his short funeral service: “When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” After an ap-

propriate and touching prayer, fervently remembering those who were bereaved, we laid, one by one, into their last resting-place the nine mutilated bodies, so changed in these last few hours that no friend could have recognized them.

Mr. Channing's unflinching devotion to the negro is illustrated by this anecdote, which exhibits at the same time his chivalrous courage. Passing down Pennsylvania Avenue one day before the Proclamation of Emancipation was issued, he saw a crowd gathered about a black man. It was a fugitive whom a body of troops were about to arrest and lead away. Channing, perceiving at a glance the situation, offered his arm, and walked away with the man as if he had a perfect right, amid the derisive jeers of the mob and the astonished looks of the soldiers. None but a man whose conviction had got into his blood could do that.

During the long and vehement debate relating to the payment of the colored soldiers, he was always on the side of equity. On the 17th of June, 1864, writing to Mr. Clarke, he says: "I do still trust that this Congress will not adjourn without doing full justice to our colored soldiers, at least. The Military Committees, both of the Senate and of the House, have through their chairmen, solemnly promised me that it shall be done, and they believe that it has been done by the action of the Conference Committee."

When the question of Civil Rights came up we find him writing to his friend Marcus Spring: —

In regard to what you say of equity to the colored men, who have fought for our flag, and defended our refugee officers, and been our volunteer scouts, and worked such miracles of love and heroism, of patience and good sense, of dignified self-command and magnanimous trust, and

risked their all and given their all for the Republic, I am heart-sick, as you and all true men are. It is not in the power of human imagination to conceive the cruelties to which these unfortunates are now subject. And really it seems impossible, however well disposed our officers and soldiers may be, altogether to prevent these horrors. . . . The problem is as complicated with difficulties of all kinds as any question ever offered for human solution. I see but one way, and that is the straight way of justice. . . . But how shall this righteous claim be enforced is the question.

Miss E. P. Peabody tells me that she was in Washington in the year of the great Proclamation, and that, coming from the Capitol with William Channing, on the momentous day of its issue, they met Mr. Colfax. The two men looked at one another, speechless from their strong emotion. At length Mr. Colfax said, "You helped." To which Channing replied, "It is worth living for, to hear you say it." But the saying was simply true. He did help create the public opinion that made the Proclamation possible. He did help by raising the moral feeling, by fostering the aspiration, by bespeaking the spiritual power, without which the pledge of emancipation would have been a dead letter.

Mr. Channing shared the alternations of feeling that others had in regard to the administration, Congress, the generals, the conduct of the war, but he never yielded to despondency for a moment, and he kept up an unfaltering faith in the people. The following letter to Marcus Spring, dated December 16, 1864, from Washington gives expression to his indomitable spirit: —

What glorious times these are to live in, to be sure!

The first year of this awful judgment nearly broke my heart; and it seemed as if, during the hideous death-in-life of the McClellan era, I could feel the very "ichor" of my spiritual energy slowly exhaling. Oh, for a Talus with his iron flail, to crush the giant 'Compromise' to powder, and cast him into the sea! Oh, for an Astræa! "How long, O Lord, how long!" was the cry. But now that the nation lives, really lives, with fresh life thrilling through every fibre and beating in every pulse, I am so young and strong and buoyant and glad, that I feel as if dancing on air, upborne on golden pinions. And so every one feels that has any soul. Old myths transform themselves to actual experiences. Young America is a Perseus, armed, panoplied, equipped, by Minerva, and monsters of wrong will be swiftly slain. However, let us dismount from Pegasus; for that sky-steed has a trick of taking the bit between his teeth, and disappearing in the clouds. So in plain prose, I merely state that all the glowing hopes which after the night of reaction in 1848-49 fell into a trance and were reverently laid in the tomb amid sweet spices, with an ever-burning lamp at head and foot, are now putting off their cerements, pushing aside the heavy stones, and rising glorified on this Easter morn of the Republic. All the old theories, plans, principles, projects, of 1842-45 are coming forth with the divinest smile of beatific vision. Do you know it, my friends? This nation is yet to realize our ideal! It is so! We shall live to see it. Our children and grandchildren will yet reap with joy the rich harvest field, whose seeds we sowed with tears on furrows fast iron-bound with frost, as we planted. We were prophets! No mocking spirits lured us. True, inasmuch as the nation would not choose the better way of peaceful transformation, God, in his infinite grace, compelled us to enter this flinty, fiery way of destruction. But the "devil is dead." Henceforth, with the master lie of our national injustice, inhumanity, insincerity, exposed and exploded, we can lay

the corner-stone and rear the Temple of Truth. Enough said. I give you the key-note of the symphony in E major that is now sounding, ay, resounding, in my soul.

Was n't "old Abe's" closing paragraph grand in its simple, steadfast sincerity? And could you have heard Chief Justice Chase read his oath of office, with its solemn closing invocation, uttered in his deep, clear tone, you would have felt a sense of the presence and power of the higher law coming down to rule over us. Divine Providence uses very frail and imperfect instruments in this tremendous judgment, this crisis, in the strongest sense, of our destiny. But what a coward and traitor . . . a man must be to do anything but trust, and be loyal to duty, and give himself and all he has to this sacred cause of freedom, which God is so miraculously crowning with victory!

Well, I told you at the start I had so much to say that I should say nothing. So I have kept my word! And with heartiest benedictions,

I am, as ever, yours in good hope,

W. H. CHANNING.

The assassination of President Lincoln was a terrible shock to him. It seemed for a moment as if the ground was giving way beneath his feet. Hope revived with the accession of Mr. Johnson, whose dealing with the enemy promised to be all that the most ardent patriot could desire. One act of the tragedy succeeded another, and at each phase the interest was exciting. The funeral procession, the trial of the conspirators, the plots and counter-plots, are reproduced in letters, at great length and with absorbing emotion. The Sunday addresses threw over events the effulgence of faith, and interpreted them by the light of the national destiny.

Mr. Channing's sermon on the Sunday after the

grand review in the spring of 1865 was surpassingly eloquent. He spoke of "the flood forever flowing down and on, from ever full fountains, unintermitting, continually renewed, immense in volume, majestic in sweep, resistless in momentum, graceful in might," that seemed like a "river of life," a very "Missouri of manhood;" of the copious flowers decking horses, spears, gun-barrels; of the torn battle-flags; of the sunlight; of the strife and the victory and the grand cause; then he added:—

Will you think it strange when I say that, as I watched the tramping army here visible, overhead, seen only by the spirit's eye, another army seemed sweeping on, clad in white robes, and waving palm-boughs, with crowns of unfading flowers, who responded to the martial strains with a "Gloria in Excelsis," and a welcome home, that filled the whole heaven with harmony, and chief among that cloud of witnesses appeared our risen President.

In February of that year, the revered mother, to whom he had always looked for approval, on whom he had steadfastly relied, whom he gratefully and tenderly loved, who had, since his infancy, filled the place of both parents, was buried at Mount Auburn, and he experienced that peculiar sense of desolation which attends the loss of a good mother's care. Her life had been one of duty, responsibility, thought, anxiety, and affliction. Her son could smile through his tears as he meditated on her "new birth into the world of spirits." Six months later his work in Washington was ended.

The war was over, the army was disbanded, the hospitals were closed, and the Unitarian church had sunk back into temporary decline. That nothing more could be done at the seat of government was

not surprising. The passions excited by the war, which had raised people to a pitch unnaturally high, had subsided. An angel could not have drawn an audience to the dreary, mildewed, tumble-down edifice of the Unitarian society. It was never fashionable or popular, and now it was more neglected than ever. The minister had labored hard ; he had never preached so grandly ; but a good deal of his labor had been bestowed in other directions, and one of the inspirations of his eloquence was taken away. In fact, his success in the hospitals and camps was rather against his continued service as the preacher of a denomination.

That the Northern Unitarians did not welcome him requires a word of explanation. It must be remembered that he had lived several years abroad ; that he had been associated with Fourierism ; that his past fervor in the cause of antislavery had not helped him. Moreover, his type of Unitarianism was more florid and tropical than suited the New England temperament. It was probably true that he was considered as, in some sense, a mystic, a visionary, and therefore an isolated individual. Yet he wished to stay in America. He sought for clerical positions. He even thought of leaving the profession : of lecturing ; of writing ; of undertaking the duties of a professorship in some college ; of asking for a consulate in England. But none of his plans promised well, and after looking over the whole field he returned to his family in England. But, before leaving the United States, he visited his old haunts, Rondout, Hyde Park, preaching and greeting former friends. His last sermons were delivered at Plymouth, as was fitting.

XIV.

ENGLAND AGAIN.

MR. CHANNING returned to England temporarily, as he thought, having no wish to pass his days abroad. The places he had occupied in Liverpool were filled. Mr. Thom had returned to Renshaw Street, and Mr. Wicksteed had been called to Hope Street. He had never lived in London, though he was familiar there. He had been in England once during the war. In the early autumn of 1863 he went back, to see his family, attend to affairs, visit old friends, gain health and refreshment, speak for the Republic, and if possible help the cause of Northern freedom abroad, perhaps to bring his family to America. He thoroughly enjoyed his short stay. In February, 1864, he was again, alone, in Washington, doing his laborious duty, and trying to make arrangements for a permanent home in his own country.

On the whole, however it was well he went back. He was more influential there, and better appreciated. His "evangelicism," if one may call it so, had a large and firm background. There was a national church, historic, poetic, with heroic traditions of sanctity, a broad church allied to scholarship and reform. Religion was associated with art, culture, social amenities. There was a deep vein of piety, but there was also a love of liberty, an elasticity of mental movement, which piety did not fear, because it was itself so

well grounded and mellow. Even dissent was not raw or crude of necessity. Unitarianism felt the spiritual pressure of the ancient faith, and was less rationalistic than in America. There, too, were fixed institutions of science, picture-galleries, museums, collections of books. He was domesticated in England. He had many delightful friends there, and now that slavery was abolished, and socialism was extinct as an industrial experiment, and his mother was dead, his affections turned in that direction. His family lived there, and had struck root. His wife liked it for various reasons. His eldest daughter found schools of art to her mind. His son was at Oxford, an enthusiastic and successful student. The charities of church people, their interest in women and children, their concern for workingmen, their sympathy with the higher education of the laboring classes, the association of great wealth with beneficence, attracted him. Speculative questions were considered settled, and nothing remained to do but to apply Christian precepts to social needs. This indeed was much, but the will was granted, and men were inquiring the way.

From the time of sailing, August 12, 1865, until near his return in 1869, he wrote long letters to his sisters, giving full and detailed accounts of his journeyings, tarryings, visitings, the places he saw, the people he met, the talks he had. There are descriptions of Oxford, Shanklin, Weston-super-Mare, Fountain Abbey. He heard Dickens read, Stopford Brooke preach, Goldwin Smith lecture; attended the Garrison reception, in 1867; met Miss Carpenter, Miss Cobbe, Miss Swanwick, Miss Edwards (author-ess of "*Barbara's History*"), Miss Burdett Coutts,

Robert Browning; moralized over the "Derby;" rambled about Kensington Gardens; went into art collections; read in the British Museum. This sketch of Frances Power Cobbe is interesting:—

Bright and beaming eyes; cheeks full yet dimpled; mouth and chin large, yet gracefully moulded; eye, cheek, lips, all smiling with heartiest good humor; a countenance radiant with swift intelligence, wit, fun, sweetness, yet firm withal, and with lines of passionate emotion; a broad, powerful brow,—imagine these crowning a portly, ample figure, and then feel your hand strongly grasped by a warm, substantial, soft hand, which tells in its very touch "What I do, I do with a will, put my heart into it," and you have the authoress of "Intuitive Morals," etc., etc., and one of the grandest women of this or any land. . . . But the charm above all is her earnestness, her deep, intense humanity, her full consciousness of the mental and moral, social and spiritual, tendencies of the age, her religious aspiration.

There is a great deal more about Miss Cobbe's past, present, and future, her liberality, her courage, her activity, which there is scanty room for, but it is all in the same strain, and conveys the same notion of elastic power.

The worshipers of Robert Browning will enjoy this delineation of him:—

Browning is a hale, muscular, full-chested, stout-built man, of some sixty or sixty-five years, I judge, with beard and hair slightly flecked with white, but vigorous, warm-blooded, healthful. His dark eye is rather soft and slumberous, till he is roused, when its flash and swift rolling motion reveal the poetic fire within. His manner is quiet, easy, simple, courteous, like that of the London Clubmen, or men of society, putting one at ease with its off-hand friendliness, and his talk is fluent, free, graceful, without overmuchness of any kind.

This was in January, 1867. Two months later he speaks with enthusiasm of "Dramatis Personæ," quotes "Rabbi Ben Ezra," praises "James Lee," explains and commends "Studge the Medium," and says of the "Caliban upon Setebos," "Is there anything grander in its sublime loftiness of tone and thought this side Dante? . . . Full of pathos and pity, as if an angel had come down to look on man, the half-master on his earth island." Even "Sordello" was no riddle to him. "I found 'Sordello' (in the old first edition, before the author punctuated it and put inverted commas for the conversations) intelligible."

Here is a pretty piece of description: —

Yesterday, passing along the summits of Worle Hill, and gazing east and west over the wide panorama, with flocks of shipping off Cardiff and Newport, and the Holmes on one side, and the snowy-plumed railroad trains rushing to and fro through the valley on the Great Western line on the other, with church towers rising from the villages through the groves and the clustering villas of Weston at my feet, I could not but meditate on the thrilling speech of John Stuart Mill, delivered only the day before, and his appeal for posterity. It is possible, though one cannot make himself believe it probable, that Great Britain has reached, in this wonderful era of her power and opulence, her zenith!

But to return to Worle Hill. A walk over the summit by woodland roads, or around the base, leads us to Kew-stoke, a little hamlet, clustered around a picturesque old church, some of the arches and stone-work of which date back to the Norman monks, who owned an abbey here, and also another at a few miles distance across the valley, where the church tower still rises above the clumps of trees. . . . The grave-stones of many generations lie grouped

about the ancient church, and a gnarled and wide-branching sycamore canopies the gravel path leading to the low portal. The parsonage of the rector sleeps in a sunny garden to the south, the matted ivy on the walls testifying to the lengthened period passed since it was built; and around the doors of the small school-house adjoining, chubby-cheeked, rosy children, in clean smocks and pinafores, may be seen playing, or seated on the benches studying their A, B, abs, before the school-dame within. . . . Kewstoke is three miles to the north of us, and about two miles or so to the south, on a grassy knoll beyond the beach, is the quaint old church and the round tower of Uphill, which dates back to very much the same era with the church of Kewstoke. We drove thither the other day, to see the pretty landscape. The roof of the ancient building is fallen in, except at one end, still kept in repair for chance services, but in the venerable tower yet hangs a famous chime of bells, that on Christmas and Easter and great festivals sounds sweetly, far and wide, across the valleys. The hill slopes suddenly down on the south to a precipitous cliff, and beneath spreads a wide grassy lowland, dappled with grazing sheep and their frolicsome lambkins, and herds of cows and cattle. To the west extends a brown promontory, beyond which, through the bluish, silvery haze, are seen the sinuous, winding uplands of Devonshire, disappearing on the horizon; and around to the southeast sweep in graceful curves the Bleaden hills, emerald green to the summit, with patches of gorse and heather. From this point, too, Weston, rising in semicircular terraces around the foot of Worle Hill, and outspreading over the plain, behind the bay and beaches, presents a very picturesque appearance.

When he went back to England, the people were full, he was full himself, of the great war in America. General Grant was in his regard "the peer of Wellington and Napoleon." "He could war like a Titan

and forgive like an angel." In the autumn of 1865, before a Social Science Congress at Sheffield, he gave a lecture on the Sanitary Commission. There he preached two Sundays, bearing in mind that many who were interested in the Congress would probably hear him. He must have been exceedingly eloquent, for Miss Mary Carpenter, coming into the vestry afterward, her face and eyes all radiant, exclaimed, "It was exactly the word we were all longing to hear;" while a gentleman said to Rev. Mr. Short, the Unitarian minister of the place, and one of the local secretaries of the Congress, "Why, who is this man? He ought to go to every city and town in Great Britain, and rouse our people up to the knowledge of their social duties." And another cried, "That is the first sermon, the first real sermon, I ever heard."

That fall he was invited to be the minister for six months, from October 15th to April 15th inclusive, of the New Oakfield Road Church at Clifton, an organization just forming as an offshoot from Dr. Carpenter's congregation in Bristol. The social advantages were choice and the situation pleasant, Clifton being "one of the most charming spots in England." The engagement must have been renewed, for in April, 1867, he writes, "My one year's ministry at Clifton was certainly one of the very happiest, so far as intercourse between myself and the congregation went, of my whole life."

In November he listened to the remarkable speech of Sir Morton Peto at the Colston Anniversary Dinner, at Bristol. This town, it should be remembered, was one of the central points for the advocacy of Southern Rights, and many of those at table were enemies of the North, yet Sir Morton, in a most em-

phatic manner, declared himself its champion and friend; and the speaker had gone to some inconvenience to be present, and openly before his constituents avow his sentiments towards the nation he honored.

On March 6, 1866, his son, Francis Allston, B. A. of Exeter College, Oxford, took the "Arnold" prize, open to all graduates of the university who had not been matriculated more than eight years. The subject was, "The Greek Orators considered as Historical Authorities." The judges were the Regius Professor of Modern History (Goldwin Smith) and the Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History (George Rawlinson). The year before, Mr. Channing had gained the "Chancellor's" prize for the English essay on "Instinct." This was the first and only time that both these prizes had been won by the same person. This triumph preceded the attainment of a lay fellowship, a position in great demand, and obtained only after a severe struggle, subsequent to which Mr. Channing had chambers at University College, an institution dating back to the time of Alfred, and ranking in antiquity with Balliol. This was a good beginning of the second English sojourn.

The 22d of June, 1867, witnessed the meeting of the "National Assembly of Unitarians" in London. There William Henry Channing, besides being a prominent figure, had the cordial satisfaction of receiving an assurance of the entire approbation of his course in regard to the society at Brixton, six years before, when he disappointed the committee by not returning from America.

The Garrison reception, on July 20, 1867, gave him the greatest pleasure, and another opportunity of

showing his sympathy with the antislavery cause. The boldest utterances called forth his heartiest applause, and he had the warmest admiration for the speech of Mr. Garrison himself. That Mr. Channing should have denounced Governor Eyre, of Jamaica, was a thing of course. His grief that Carlyle, Kingsley, and others upheld the Governor's action was profound. Despotism he could not abide. In December, 1867, he seems to have connected himself as minister with the Free Christian Church, in Newton Street, Kensington. In the spring of 1868, this branch was transferred to Linden Hall, Linden Grove, Notting Hill. The ceremony of the transfer drew some distinguished people. There were Sir John Bowring, J. J. Tayler, James Martineau, M. D. Conway, Henry W. Bellows, on his way home from the East, several gentlemen of London and Liverpool, Unitarian clergymen of local note. Messrs. Tayler, Martineau, Bellows, and Bowring (who came in late, having presided at a meeting of workingmen) spoke. Mr. Channing said : —

We call ourselves a Free Christian Church, and, however humble our beginnings and small in numbers our present gathering, our hope and aims are to prove ourselves helpers in building up the Church of Universal Unity. By the name "Free Christian," we mean to show forth our conviction that the Christian religion is appointed by Providence to be the bond of communion for universal unity, — the unity of man around the earth, the unity of humanity on earth with humanity in heaven, the unity of man universal with the living God, — and it is our belief that only by the free development and exercise of human powers can this divine end be fulfilled. The name "Free Christian" stands as the symbol of inward freedom, — intellectual, spir-

itual, and social. It means freedom in theology; that, by widest research through all religious systems, critical study of most various creeds, and reverent yet fearless discussion of the highest problems involved in man's nature, relations, and destiny, we may come to see clearly the revelation of the Divine character and will to man; the manifestation of God in humanity. It means freedom in holy aspiration, that we may be made one in prayer and penitence, in hope and longing, in consecration and devotedness, in love and joy with the saints of all ages, until we learn by experience, as they learned, to enter into the liberty of the children of God, and to become evermore filled from this fullness. It means, finally, freedom to embody in personal and social life that law of love which is the real reign of Heaven on earth, which is the real indwelling of the living God in human societies, and which is gradually transforming the laws, institutions, manners, and characters of men throughout the leading nations. . . . We are waiting, longing, working for the blessed time — steadily however slowly, coming nearer — when freedom of thought and freedom of spirit shall be fulfilled and perfected in the freedom of loving life throughout communities and nations.

The change to the new quarters was delightful.

Last Sunday, May 31st, we emerged from our lowly cradle, and stepped forth hopefully into new quarters, — two large apartments, opening into one another, giving room for some two hundred or more persons, with light, fresh air, and pleasant surroundings. Our present little chapel was formerly the studio of the painter Creswick, and within its walls some of his best pictures were finished. Around it is a garden, which next year we hope to make pretty and tasteful. And the entrance is under an avenue of lindentrees from the high-road to Bayswater opposite the "Mall," Kensington. Old Mr. Creswick — for I regret to say that

he is quite infirm from age and illness — left these premises when the Metropolitan Railroad broke up part of his ground, and built himself a beautiful and commodious dwelling just above us in the grove. But now the tunnel is completed and covered up again, and we have hired, papered, painted, and generally renewed the house and studio. The chapel is high, airy, and well lighted from two very large windows, one in each room, opening out upon the gardens. The walls have been painted of a most eye-charming tint, between lavender and mauve, called “annaline,” warm and rose-hued below, pearly and cool above, a gold beading dividing them, and oak wainscoting at the base. They will be lighted with gas-lustres in the centre of each room, with falling light from the ceiling. And thus the effect will be at once sober and simple, yet beautiful. But we are not confined to the ground floor and the chapel, with a nice vestry opening out of it, once Creswick’s color-room. By a winding staircase we ascend to two spacious rooms above, one of which — with crimson-papered and wood-inlaid walls, and roofed with wood, cut in long paneling of different shades and arranged in graceful figures with heavy pendants — was formerly Creswick’s billiard-room. We intend it for lectures, concerts, and classes. The other room, rather smaller, and painted of like tint with the chapel, can be used as a drawing-room or class-room. Thus at once, you see, the social element will be closely associated, as it always should be, with the spiritual element in our Free Church. And even this does not exhaust our space for possible usefulness. By a glass-covered gallery we pass from the chapel into an ample room with a bow window, — once Creswick’s dining-room, — which we hope to open as a Free Library and Reading-Room, thus adding the Intellectual Element to the Spiritual and Social. It all looks quite bright and promising.

He evidently hoped that the change of place would

bring a change of aim. He had not been satisfied with the original organization. It was not inclusive, wide, humane enough. The founders were afraid "to trust themselves to the inspiration that stirs in the heart of this whole age, throughout Christendom. And they will find, alas! too late! how terribly in earnest this age is."

His speech at the inauguration of the chapel at Linden Grove was charged with expectations. It had the old ring in it. It might have been delivered twenty-five years before, in fact, it was his view from the time of his manifesto at New York, in 1843, and expressed the kind of socialism that had probably interfered with his success as an organizer in the new country as in the old. At all events, his anticipations were not fulfilled. His labor was not rewarded either in gold, popularity, or the spread of his gospel. He could not take charge of a "Unitarian" church however liberal. This was not the beginning of the end he sought.

The Society dwindled from the start and ceased in about two years. The poor heard him gladly, the spiritually-minded were rejoiced, the humane found comfort, the children had a warm friend. Among those who were attracted was, I am told, Edwin Arnold, who strayed in again and again, but knew nothing about the preacher, until he called later to see Miss Channing, who became his wife. The son-in-law is described as "a rare person, of singularly sweet and generous character, a fine genius, a poet in life as well as in word."

The parish at Notting Hill was his last one, but he was always active in religious affairs, preaching, lecturing, writing, officiating at conventions, deliver-

ing ordination sermons ; ever a Unitarian, but ever exerting himself to spiritualize Unitarianism, and to extend freedom beyond theological lines. This, indeed, was his errand on earth. He journeyed about Great Britain constantly, holding himself ready on all occasions to go where he was wanted, at any expense of personal comfort. His summers were spent in different places, in Scotland, Wales, by the sea ; and in every spot he saw beauties that are concealed from common eyes. The blending of the material and the spiritual is incessantly revealed to him. Here is a characteristic picture in Scotland of a scene that impressed his mind deeply.

The dawn and sunrise of to-day were so surpassingly splendid, so heavenly, that it seems like selfish ingratitude not to try, by description, to share my rapture, hopeless as all attempts may be to reflect the glory. Waking, then, about 4½-5, a gorgeous flush in the sky drew me directly to the window, and there, in the slumberous stillness, — for no songster was awake, and the murmur of wavelets even was hushed, — in the almost awful silence, — my eyes beheld, hanging all round the horizon, pendent fringes of tightly rolled cirri, of that transparent rose-tint which one sees on the lips of shells. The whole dome of heaven looked like an imperial tent, awaiting the entrance of the supreme, and beneath the undulating border of the canopy pearl-gray vapors slowly circled round the mountain tops, and swept with waving movements up the valleys. One high ridge, alone, shone brightly blushing, — as if bowing to welcome with reverent salutation the coming King. While beneath the unruffled surface of the loch, blending all hues of crimson, emerald, and gray with its own blueness, outspread like a dais around a throne. But how evanescent was the spectacle. Even while one gazed in adoration, pallor fell, like a veil, over the blushing moun-

tain heads; the low hanging canopies faded to ashy-brown, the pearly vapors vanished in a film, the glowing lake grew cold as a plate of steel. The ideal toned down its ecstasy to common-place reality. The host of angel-visitants withdrew from mortal sight. The work-day world awoke; yet could one but have mounted above the pale, gray shadows, he might have witnessed the undimmed sun ascending its throne of glory, on the summits of those clouds, and so above and beyond the "Actual," more radiant than in reflected brightness, shone out the "Ideal Real." Heaven embosoms the earth, as it rolls on its way of blended splendor and shadow, and the very power that rolls it is Light. So much for the morning hour.

And now for the evening. Oh! could you but have been with me towards sunset! Winding up and around our moorland, climbing by the sheep-tracks, through the tangled beds of "brake" and heather, at length I reached a summit, and beneath a purple boulder of brownish rock threw myself down at full length upon my back. The elastic heather-bushes upbore me by their countless armlets and handlets, as on a yielding yet springing couch, while the breeze bore a faint, spicy odor round me like incense. Beneath, far away, spread the azure loch, amidst the verdant lowlands and mountain slopes; and in the west, a sun-gleam breaking through a cloud-rift, whence hung the fringe of a golden shower, dropped a ladder of light into the valley for descending angels. And the grassy hollow whereon fell the sunshower lay glowing in splendor like a real Beth-El, a Tabernacle for the All-Beautiful! Above, cloud-circles of pearly gray and madder, with golden veins, opened like windows in a dome into the fathomless azure. And, through there, the spirit seemed to ascend and spread its wings in the all-embracing presence of Infinite Peace. How in such hours of sublime contemplation one comprehends the instinct of man in the primitive ages, to seek to see the Invisible face to face, and give a name to the un-

namable on the "High Places"! How one faintly apprehends the longing of the Beloved Son to pass whole nights in prayer upon the mountain top! Lying flat upon the bosom of our Mother Earth, as she floats in light, we seem to have almost sensible consciousness that we live and move and have our being in the all-enfolding Life of life.

Mr. Channing met many delightful people, among others, quite worthy of mention if space permitted, Dean Stanley, with whom he dined at the house of his friend, Miss Anna Swanwick. It ought to be quoted:—

The excellent Dean was most courteous and cordial, speaking of his visit to America with almost enthusiastic delight. Among others he mentioned Phillips Brooks (whom, by the way, Frank and his friend Burton regard as the most inspiring preacher they ever heard) with heartiest admiration and sympathy. And he dwelt at length on his visit to R. W. Emerson at Concord, describing the home circle and his host with ever affectionate interest, and commenting on Emerson's conversation and writings, and of H. Thoreau and Walden, with fine discrimination, as if he had fully appreciated this experience of our best American life. Of my dear uncle, too, he spoke with earnest warmth, repeating emphatically what he has already published in Macmillan, and adding other illustrative comment. Altogether our short interview before dinner was most interesting. At dinner also, as the Dean sat on Miss Swanwick's right and I on her left, our conversation was renewed in the most spirited way, as Miss Swanwick is an admirable talker. Among other men of the day it was most pleasant to hear the Dean of Westminster express himself so respectfully as well as heartily of Matthew Arnold, regarded alike as a man, a critic, and specially as a poet. He quoted some of his poems with high commendation, as proving the fine Hellenic genius and culture of Mr. Arnold. Intimate

as he was with Dr. Arnold, Dean Stanley feels something akin to parental fondness of regard doubtless for his young friend. And he seemed gratified that both Miss Swanwick and I heartily appreciated Mr. Arnold's poems, and that we quite agreed with him that Justin McCarthy, in his brilliant "*History of our Times*," has not done justice to Mr. Arnold. This led us on to speak of Justin McCarthy; and the Dean became much interested in the sketch of Mr. McCarthy's remarkably rapid rise from being a newspaper reporter, — as he was when I first knew him in Liverpool and when he used to report my sermons at Renshaw Street Chapel, — through his period of successful editorship, lecturing and novel-writing, to becoming an M. P. who has made his mark in his first session. Especially pleased was the good Dean with my account of Justin McCarthy's fine qualities in the domestic circle, and of his rolling his first child in a perambulator, while his loving wife walked beside them. Indeed Justin McCarthy is a quite uncommonly talented, simple-hearted, cheerfully confiding, brave, buoyant, and genial person, and to me one of the most interesting novelists of the day. The Dean had not read any of the novels, however. Finally it ended in his saying, "Will you kindly ask Mr. McCarthy, to come and see me; perhaps I can give him some new facts for his history." So I wrote to Justin McCarthy, and this has opened an acquaintance that may help my old Liverpool reporter to take one more step upward in the social and literary scale. Altogether my impressions of the Dean of Westminster were most agreeable.

Some time before he had heard Mr. Stanley preach in Westminster Abbey, and thus described him : —

Stanley is not in manner of expression or delivery in the least "eloquent." Indeed he evidently studies to be calm, self-restrained, plain, "quiet," as the English say, meaning thereby "in good taste." But his language is rich though

simple, and his thought deep and clear, while condensed. His close cut, iron-gray hair, and his scarlet hood over his surplice, give a certain venerable air to his thin and deeply lined countenance. And though rather small and weak in appearance, his voice is full and strong, and each word was heard distinctly. His subject was the "Spirit and Form of the Christian Church, as related to the State and Age," or rather, perhaps, the "Life of the Christian Religion as developed by means of the Progress of Civilization," and after a very admirable statement of the preparation of the world by the instrumentality of the Roman Empire for the advent of a Universal Religion, he brought all the experience of the past in Christendom to bear upon the problem of "Church and State in England." I wondered, as I listened to his broad, free, generous principles so calmly applied to the questions which are now stirring the passions of this whole nation, — how far the preacher or his hearers comprehended their significance. Here was the Dean of Westminster, in this grand old cathedral, which has witnessed so many a splendid scene of coronation, and where sleep the ashes of the statesmen and churchmen, prelates and scholars, heroes and poets, artists and philanthropists of all England's great ages, — on the Christmas of 1868, — deliberately taking it for granted (not arguing, asserting, or attempting to prove) that the Anglican Church is the Church of the nation, — that Romanists and Dissenters of all degrees are equally members of it with professed Episcopalians, and that it is so large, living, and inspiring, that it can absorb, assimilate, and recombine all petty differences of creed or form; and finally, that the life of this National Church consists not in its forms, or ritual, or hierarchies, but in the living religion of good men, good women, and good children, regarded as individually the children of God! Verily! I doubt if the walls of Westminster have ever listened to doctrine more revolutionary, or rather more reformatory, than this, or what is implied in the principles thus declared. . . . It is an omen indeed.

Thus heartily he speaks of Colenso:—

And this brings me to my very interesting interview with this distinguished man at my friend William Shaen's, who is the bishop's counsel. He has come suddenly from Natal to right a monstrous wrong. . . . He will have to fight his way through many adverse influences, but he is utterly fearless, makes the cause of justice his religion, never knows when he is beaten, with true John-Bull pluck, and will, we trust, triumph. He is a charming man in appearance, manner, tone, speech, and wins one's heart at once. In figure he is full six feet two, stately in carriage, and though rather spare, yet stalwart, muscular, and strong. As he sat in an easy-chair, stretching out his feet towards the genial grate, his long gaitered limbs showed splendid muscular development, and one had a satisfactory sense of his power to climb mountains and walk swamps or rivers in long marches. Perilous experiences he has passed through by the scores; and only last year came very nigh to being swept away and drowned in trying to ford by night a swollen stream. His complexion has bronzed under the fierce summer heats of Natal, and his dark hair is now grizzled. But the blue eyes beam softly through his spectacles, and a most cordial smile lights up his features as he speaks, though he can be fiery when duty calls, and he rather likes a free fight, one fancies. Above all, he is simple, frank, unassuming, a thorough high-bred gentleman in his graceful ease, and modest withal, though so distinguished. The next evening it was my good fortune to meet him again at my friend's Frances Power Cobbe.

Mr. Channing was fascinated by Protap Chunder Mozoomdar, to whom he refers several times. In fact, nothing shows the reach of his sympathies more than his hearty admiration of this child of the East, this man of another race; and nothing gives more

absolutely the key to his own spiritual view than his reception of Mozoomdar's thought.

On Sunday, Miss Winkworth, her sister Alice, and the two young Shaens went with me to the Free Christian Church in Camden Town (Rev. P. W. Clayden's) to hear Mozoomdar preach. Mr. C. conducted the services, and then Mozoomdar ascended the pulpit. He is dark as a mulatto, with very regular features, a finely formed head, and a singularly beaming sweetness of expression. His voice is full, rich, and clear; his figure is erect, and his gesture free and graceful. He speaks entirely without notes, as Keshub did, and as all the Brahmos do. And he spoke really from inspiration. It was a noble sermon, grand in scope, exact in argument, intensely practical, and fervently devout, on "Oneness with God, in the Spirit of Universal Love." This he affirmed as at once true Theism, as it is true Christianity. The very life of Jesus, he said, was this loving unity with the Father in disinterested service of the whole family of man. So exactly did he unfold the doctrine most dear to me, that when I came home I said to Julia, "It seemed to me all through as if I was preaching through him." He closed with one of the most touchingly simple, earnest prayers and benedictions I ever listened to. Miss Winkworth was deeply moved by the whole service, as were we all. On the next day he came to dine all alone, and we passed several hours together in most earnest talk; and my most favorable impressions were fully confirmed. He is singularly ingenuous, open-minded, simple-hearted, and does honor to the Brahmos as their representative. . . . He gave me at full length a most instructive account of their method of devout training and religious life in their collective home of the Brahmo missionaries, where some forty to sixty men and women live. They have practically solved the problem of united families living in peace, without sacrificing the sacredness of the

family. Here is where Keshub Chunder Sen and his friends are training by deep interior discipline, at once religious, intellectual, and social, a body of devoted evangelists, to carry that doctrine and method of holy living throughout India.

He attended the "International Congress of Orientalists;" had a conversation with Lepsius and his distinguished assistant Dr. Stirn; heard Brugsch Bey; had an interview with Spiegel; listened to Oppert; talked with Haug; met George Smith, and drove with Fergusson. The whole experience was exciting, and tended to confirm him in his interpretation of Egyptian, Indian, Persian ideas, and to strengthen his conviction of a pure theism and revelation of God in the East.

The funeral of Livingstone was an occasion of great interest. Pleasant also it was to meet Sir Henry Maine, whose "Ancient Law" had impressed him. In one of his letters he gives a long account of Miss Octavia Hill, the heroic worker among the poor in London, with whom and her "poor tenants" he went on an excursion, encouraging in view of what was doing, but sad as suggesting how much remained to be done, and how "naughty" the world continued notwithstanding the bright flame of the candle.

The whole world passed before him, and he paid attention to it. The war between France and Germany, in which his sympathies were with the sufferers; the Commune, whose representatives outraged his sense of justice as well as his love of peace. He did not "dilate with the wrong emotion" as he listened to a grand performance of "The Messiah" at the Crystal Palace. He looked on at a boat-race. He mingled with the crowd when a fearful explosion occurred on

the Thames. He saw the bridal procession when the Duke of Edinburgh brought his Duchess home to England. He laid eyes on the Shah of Persia.

It is a little surprising that his acquaintance should have been so largely with clerical people, and with people interested in church affairs; for though he was a preacher, he was concerned too about literature, art, music. But I find no mention of George Eliot, or Tennyson, or Rosetti, or Morris, or Swinburne. Mr. Browning whom he considered the first of living English poets, he did meet again. The real truth, however, appears to be that his sympathies were mainly with those who combined fervent faith with humanity. He loved a liberal, philanthropic Churchman, — one too who was heading towards “Evangelicalism.” That he should be a “Christian” was necessary to intimacy; necessary, too, it was that he should be philanthropic. That he should be “liberal” was highly important, but not absolutely indispensable. Toleration would answer. Among his papers is a package containing several discourses by Charles Voysey, with a draft of a letter to Mr. Voysey relating to an address delivered by the latter before a conference of ministers, advocating Theism as a substitute for Christianity. The letter was one of remonstrance, and earnest appeal from an older man to a younger, from a man of large experience to one who as yet had seen but little of life, from a friend of Emerson and Parker to one who could not be so fortified by trial of doubt. The lines fairly throbbed with emotion. Hence, probably, his indifference towards distinguished men, like Congreve, Harrison, Stopford Brooke, whose faces were set in another direction. His heart went out to the ancient faith. Not that his trust in Jesus was any-

thing new, or anything different from what it had been for many years; but as "Brook Farm" and the "Religious Union of Associationists" became a vision of the past, the belief in Christianity seemed to be more, as the cliffs look higher when the tide is out. The belief indeed had become riper, more impassioned, but it was already there. His interest in mission-meetings, prayer-meetings, baptism and communion services, hymns, and other helps to devotion, might have been less fervent, still the intellectual groundwork existed a generation and more before. As early as November, 1847, he wrote an article for the "Christian Examiner" on "Edwards and the Revivalists," clearly expressing his later views, though not with the new warmth or brilliancy. Indeed, words can hardly give an idea of the ardor of his religious emotions after his return to England. Names and parties were nothing to him. Romanists, Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Unitarians, were alike in his regard so they were fervent enough. He took the warmest interest in the confirmation of his younger daughter, and in the sacred pleasures of his family. His letters overflowed with pious phrases. Every note ended with a benediction. Devotional verses repeatedly occur, even in his short epistles. His errands were errands of duty, and his choicest offices were those of aspiration. Every scene was suggestive of the Infinite Beauty, every incident reminded him of the Supreme Love. At the same time, whenever bad theology or ignorant criticism crossed his path, he noticed it, and commented on it, not being able to throw off his rationalist training. In an interview between Mozoomdar and Tyndall his sympathies were with Mozoomdar, "the innocent, frank,

truth-telling son of India," who made the "man of science" open his heart and confess to a longing for a religious revival, to come from the East. This mixture of philosophy and faith was quite to his mind; only the faith must come first. His only quarrel — if quarrel be not too strong a word for his affectionate opposition — was with the atheists and materialists who disbelieved in the spiritual powers. He was accused of "over-liberality" by the church-devotees because he kept up his connection with the Unitarians, and of "under-liberality" by the secularists because he worshiped a living God.

On the occasion of a Unitarian ministerial conference at Islington, when Mr. Charles Voysey, with whom he had been in strong sympathy at the time of his trial for heresy, delivered an elaborate address in favor of Theism as a substitute for Christianity, Mr. Channing gave before the same conference, at its closing evening session, a discourse, the opening passage only of which was written, on Christianity and Theism, wherein, judging from the extant notes, he expressed a vehement dissent from Mr. Voysey's doctrine. He went over the whole ground; his reading was enormous; his thought was clear; his language was direct and persuasive. Plainly, he associated certain spiritual sentiments, such as worship, trust, aspiration, enthusiasm, child-like dependence, joy, with faith in Christ, as the special manifestation of God.

His interest in revivals of religion was exceedingly great. He could even rejoice in the success of Moody and Sankey, and had a cheerful word to say about the French pilgrimages to Paray-le-Monial and Lourdes. While he hailed with delight any signs of

activity in the Romish Church ; among the Anglicans, whether of the High or Low persuasion ; in the various communions of dissent ; thinking it shameful that the Unitarians, with their exalted conceptions of God, man, Christ, immortality, were so lukewarm : apparently supposing that the rational and the emotional powers went together, and that the more wide-seeing one was, the more enthusiastic one ought to be. In his case, doubt was not involved in the process of inquiry. The more he studied the more he aspired. The broader his view the more profound his longing. He actually meditated a crusade against spiritual deadness from the " liberal " side.

In 1874, on May 3d, in Little Portland Street Chapel, Mr. Channing began a series of eight discourses on " Real Religion and Religious Realism." They were thus, in part, described in " The Unitarian Review and Religious Magazine " for July.

Rev. W. H. Channing, in London, has been making a special effort, in several Sunday evening lectures on " Real Religion and Religious Realism," to set on foot an organized revival of spiritual interest among " all seekers of the perfect life." Real religion should be " a living bond of union between humanity and heaven." In his first lecture Mr. Channing sketched five tendencies of the age which hinder real religion, the putting of culture, or art, or science, or morality, or worldliness into the place of religion. He then sketched as many forms of " the grand revival that has begun to reveal itself throughout Christendom," alluding to the conflict in the Catholic Church, one side of which is a reawakening of the deeply devout and humane life of the great patristic and mediæval saints ; to the Ritualist movement in the Anglican Church, the better side of which is an earnest effort to make real the presence of God ;

to the genuine spiritual awakening attending the wide-spread evangelical revival excitement; to the activity of pure Theism, of which he pronounced F. W. Newman to be the true prophet in Great Britain; and to the movement among the progressive Jews. In the face of all this Mr. Channing lamented "the lukewarm, inert, hopeless, and half-alive" condition of liberal communions, and propounded Real Religion as the cure. This he defined to be "a Life of Relationship with Living Spiritual Realities," of which five circles may be pointed out: first, the consciousness of living communion with the universal Father; second, the consciousness of forming part of a world of spirits, the life and laws of which encompass us and bear us on forever; third, the sense of a similar relation to humanity as an organic and immortal whole; fourth, the absolute union of our progress and life with the progress and life of humanity, and of the spiritual universe, by the equal dependence of all things upon One eternal presence; and, fifth, the supreme duty for each one of working for good and against evil as our best sacrifice to God and truest imitation of Christ.

In his second lecture Mr. Channing discoursed of "Real Christian Conversion." As opposed to this he remarked five classes, those who treat the story of Christ as mythical; those who see in Christ only an ideal holy man and sage; those who say that humanity is the true Christ; those who reject the Christian Church and seek communion on socialistic and secularistic grounds; and those who make the Church a police in the interest of reaction. Following this, Mr. Channing told at length the religious experiences which had confirmed him in the conviction of the truth of Christianity and of real Christian conversion, the process of which he unfolded as follows: first, to see in Christ a type of our own sonship; second, to become contrite in view of our failure to come up to the measure of our privilege; third, to unreservedly consecrate ourselves to that service

which becomes the sons of God ; fourth, to carry this out in thorough doing as God's Christ would do in our places ; and, fifth, to organize this imitation of Christ in actual society.

In a third and fourth lecture Mr. Channing explained his views of real communion with the Father, and of a new order proposed to be established for the promotion of filial and fraternal communion of man with God and with his fellow-man. As tendencies favorable to the realization of communion with the Father, Mr. Channing spoke of the effort of science to comprehend One Living Energy as the Force of all forces ; the effort of poetry to seize in imagination a vision of the development of the universe and of the unfolding history of man ; and the deepening estimate of music as an art prophetic of the harmonies of communion. In contrast with these Mr. Channing placed three unfavorable tendencies of the age : first, the self-contradictory assertion that we can know God only as the Unknowable ; second, the pantheistic denial of the personality of God which comes of excessive reaction against narrow views of the divine arbitrariness ; and, third, the fatalism which mocks at prayer as the imbecile expression of cowardly superstition. In contrast with these false tendencies of the age, Mr. Channing unfolded the inspiring reality of loving and living fellowship between man and God, pictured the realization of this in Jesus, analyzed the laws of the heavenly human life revealed in Christ, traced the ascending stages of this life from sinless youth to complete oneness with God, and pointed out how to make this life a fact of actual human society.

A sixth lecture was on "The Church of Universal Unity as completing the Catholic and Evangelical churches." A seventh treated of "The Order of the Church of God." The eighth and last dwelt on "The Real Second Advent." The last two were not re-

ported, probably because none but a long and full account would do them anything like justice, certainly not because the audience was small or listless. On the contrary, the number of listeners increased as the course went on. The speaker himself was satisfied with the lectures as well as he was with anything he did. Appended to his own copy of the reports are these words: "If I never live to write out and publish these discourses in full, let these reports, imperfect as they are, be printed in a memoir as my yea and amen of Faith, Hope, and Love, in Living Communion with the All-Blessed Father, and His Beloved Son, by one Spirit of Love Universal." They were, in truth, a very full and adequate expression of his idea, and I am sorry that room is wanting to print here the reports even; but they simply convey, with different allusions to individuals and sects, principles with which, by this time, we must be familiar. It is unnecessary to say that the lectures were brilliant, inspiring, positive, skillfully constructed. The generalizations were bold, free, captivating. But lightning did not accompany the thunder. "They departed, each one to his own house." The earnestness was unquestionable, but the method was speculative. The speaker dazzled rather than convinced, and told people what they ought to do, instead of making them do it.

The next year, 1875, Mr. Channing wrote a letter to the committee and council of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, with the intention of awakening some united effort in the direction of organization for spiritual ends. This letter was not sent; a shorter one took its place, but the same views pervaded both.

Surely [he says] our communion should concentrate and blend in one all the saintliness, sweetness, strength, hope, and joy of every communion, in a new form of godly goodness, vigorous as it is beautiful, and helpful as it is blessed. How peculiar is our privilege thus to proclaim that real religion is a life of fellowship with the living God throughout the whole range of human relationships. And in such an era of Christendom as this, are we not manifestly commissioned to welcome all people into the One, True, Universal Church, the family of the children of God? . . . Let us distinctly recognize that liberal Christianity alone can save Christendom from that disastrous outburst of infidel skepticism, speculative sophistry, and social anarchy, which threatens the civilized world with a chaos — religious, intellectual, political, and domestic — as terrible as the cataclysm that swallowed up the ancient states in the Fall of the Roman Empire. . . . Now in an era involving such tremendous issues, let liberal Christians look the facts in the face without illusion, and solemnly ask themselves whether Catholicism and Evangelicalism can conceivably even solve the practical problems which are everywhere pushing themselves to the front, and with all past experience to give warning, can they credit that mere science and philosophy are of power to regulate the mad-denied passions of mankind? Never real religion alone, — a real life of love, concentrated around and inflowing from a Heavenly Father in fullness of living communion with his Risen and Glorified SON, and indwelling by the Spirit of Adoption with this Universal Family, — can adequately supply the longings of the people throughout civilized Christendom for Brotherhood, Equity, and Peace.

After this there can be no doubt of Mr. Channing's substantial Unitarianism. It was because he was a Unitarian that he made the appeal in behalf of real religion ; of a pure, untrammelled spirituality.

His aspiration was after a vitally broad Church, a Church strictly universal, neither Romanist nor Protestant, neither Eastern nor Western, — on the basis of liberal principles in thought. In 1876 he published a very long article in the London “*Inquirer*” to prove that Theodore Parker was “a Unitarian Christian.” He delighted to associate himself publicly with Unitarians, as the following extracts from letters show, written in the spring of 1874, one describing a royal reception at Windsor Castle, the other a similar visit to Buckingham Palace.

16 HORNTON STREET, KENSINGTON, *March 21, 1874.*

MY DEAR SISTERS, — . . . On Wednesday, headed by Dr. Martineau (as we are now learning to call him), Dr. Sadler, etc., we went in a party of twelve to Windsor. The sun was gloriously bright as we rode along through the beautifully verdant lowlands between London and the Castle, and sitting opposite to J. M. in the railroad carriage, I enjoyed the study of his grand head and countenance. Our honored friend climbs higher up the mount of vision as he draws nearer to the great transformation, and the serene light of the cloudless heaven crowns his brow. I would like to quote his words on Stopford Brooke, whom I (strangely enough for an American Free Christian) had just been defending against the unjust charge of being “a Unitarian in disguise.” But it would take too long, — for all this is a digression. As several delegations from the cities of London, Edinburgh, Dublin, etc., and from the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, were also going up with addresses, it was impossible to get carriages. So we gladly walked to the Castle, a short half-mile, and found a crowd of on-lookers gathered in the front court, and a battalion of the Guards paraded, with the famous Dan Godfrey’s Band playing magnificent military airs in honor of Princess

Louise's birthday (which it happened to be). We were received by the attendants in scarlet and gold and awfully ugly inverted chimney-pot shakos, and amidst lines of servants were ushered up the carpeted stairways, and through gorgeous and glittering room after room, and hall after hall, until we found ourselves in the lofty and immense "Waterloo Room," where a long table was spread from end to end with refreshments, hot and cold meats, fruit, wine, etc., and a large company of waiters, some in scarlet and gold, with epaulets like general officers, others in black and white ties like parsons, grouped behind it. Here the immense London delegation in their blue robes with fur collars, the Mayor in their midst, his golden collar and medals, etc., around his neck, and mace-bearers behind him, and the Dublin delegation in scarlet robes, and the Universities in their varied attire, had been lunching; and we in turn took our places. There was nothing specially choice in the entertainment; but all seemed to be on a liberal and hearty scale. And as we came for other ends than feasting, our refreshment was speedily dispatched, and we passed onward to the reception rooms. Here we found ourselves "sandwiched" between the London delegation and the Dublin and Edinburgh delegations. And as the former were in blue and the latter in scarlet, while we were all in black gowns with white clerical bands, and the chamberlains, ushers, etc. were in black and purple velvets, or scarlet and gold, the play of color must have been rather effective to onlookers, I fancy. And many of them there were. For at every open side-door and window, as we were amused to see, were crowds of neatly dressed servants and their friends, or visitors from Windsor. At length two folded doors were opened and the London delegation passed through to the "Royal Presence," while we remained shut out, as the doors silently closed again. Five minutes, more or less, were passed in marshaling ourselves in rank, four abreast, and in chat, when

again the gilded lids fell back, and we found ourselves in the "White Room" before the Queen. She was dressed in black with her "Mary Stuart" cap, and a white scarf or shawl around her shoulders and arms. She advanced, smiling graciously, a step or two, reaching forth her right hand to accept the address, which was presented by Dr. Martineau. He had been prepared to read it. But she quietly thanked him in a word and took it, returning him a written answer. And then Dr. Martineau and Dr. Sadler "kissed hands," which form consists in half-kneeling, raising the right hand to the lips and fondling the back of it as softly or as ardently as feeling or taste may prompt. The Queen is much altered since the only time I was ever in her presence before, on the occasion of the marriage of the Princess Royal, and has grown much fuller in face and person. But her expression was cheerful, earnest, gentle at once and dignified, as if she was really touched by the affectionate respect and sympathy of her people. Behind her was her chair of state, over which it seemed to me was an ermine robe, though time permitted a glance only. For there on her left were her two daughters, the Princess Louise (Marchioness of Lorne), Princess Beatrice, and on her right, the Duchess of Wellington and the Duchess of Roxburghe, two very splendidly beautiful women, — while several high dignitaries in splendid attire stood around. Altogether the spectacle was brilliant and commanding; yet as I looked on the Queen, a pathetic sense of her faithful and fond devotedness to her husband's memory through her twelve years' widowhood was the central impression. "This is a good, true-hearted woman, and the wife, and the mother are of infinitely higher worth to her than the Queen," I said to myself, "ready as she is to discharge to the full all duties of the sovereign." Whenever you hear the mean sneers and carping criticisms which some of our countrymen and countrywomen permit themselves to be guilty of, following the bad example of English radicals, always refer

the slanderers to Arthur Helps' frequent and uncompromising tributes of honor to Queen Victoria's moral and intellectual qualities. Remember he is one of the most high-minded and highly cultured men in Great Britain; and for years he has known her in most intimate domestic and official relations. And he not only highly respects her, but he heartily loves her for her generous character and noble aims. See, if you will, his last testimony to her, in his dedication to the Queen of his "Life and Labors of Mr. Brassey." For my part, merely as an American, I am rejoiced at every opportunity of manifesting regard to a sovereign, who is not only truly royal towards her own nation, but grandly equitable to other nations and a true friend to our Republic.

LONDON, *April 4, 1874.*

MY DEAR SISTERS, — Thank you, first of all, for the full and most interesting account of Charles Sumner's death and burial contained in the papers sent by you. The nation and the state have honored themselves in paying these tributes of affectionate reverence to one so worthy of honor. It would be a satisfaction to add my small wreath to those high-piled mounds of funeral garlands. But to begin even to say what I knew to be true of our friend, would fill a long letter. Let me only here record, then, that having been received into his most intimate confidence during the whole of our war for freedom (for again and again when I called to see him, and found the room full of claimants of all kinds, he would take me alone into his inner room to talk with me privately), I here testify that I never once heard him present any lower motive for policy than Equity, Patriotism, and Human Rights. And of all the public men I knew in Washington, no one was so singly and simply ruled and guided by conscience. I used often to say "C. S. has the genius of rectitude." Intuitively he saw the right like sunshine on his path. But if I attempt to de-

scribe or discriminate, there will be time and room for nothing else. So, for to-day at least, I limit my tribute to his central source of character. Send me all you can about him. Take his life as a whole, it wonderfully realized his highest ideal. . . . And now for the boat-race. Owing to the tide, we started early. So, as soon as Frank could reach us from Brighton, and Will from his hotel, J. B. and I and Frank packed ourselves into a cab, putting Will on the box, for a better view of the crowd and all the funny sights; and set off for Hammersmith Bridge. The soft, bright morning had drawn out even a larger multitude than usual, and every thoroughfare and the river-banks, bridges, barges, boats, were swarming with men and women and children of all classes and ages, each with a badge of dark or light blue,—even the omnibus horses and the “cabbie” whips being decorated. Singular infatuation, it seems, at first sight; but making all allowance for mixed motives of curiosity, fashion, imitative sympathy, partisanship, gambling, etc., etc., at least a vast majority of these hundreds of thousands are prompted by a genuine and generous love of manliness. London, in a way, idolizes these stalwart and beautiful young river-gods, and rejoices for the hour in hero-worship. The passion for athleticism may be a little overcharged, but the influence is healthful and honest essentially. Julia with womanly skill had selected a room, commanding a full view of the river for a mile at least; and there we stood, enjoying the splendid and animating scene of the swelling throngs, the passing steamers gayly decked with banners and streamers, the tilting small boats, with their loads of passengers, and the steady flood pouring across Hammersmith Bridge; till, at length, the river-police boat cleared the track, and a deep, rushing, roaring cry, waxing ever louder from down the river, announced that they “were off.” “Here they come!” cried Frank, who with his opera-glass was watching the lower bend, and Cambridge is on our side of the river.

"Hurrah for Cambridge!" "Hurrah for Oxford!" "The Light Oars win!" "The Dark-Blues ahead!" swell in deafening chorus on all sides. And in a moment, from under the arches of Hammersmith Bridge, both boats abreast spring into the flashing sunshine before us. It was impossible to tell which was winner so far, though to my eye, at the moment, the Dark-Blues were slowly gaining. "Well-rowed, Oxford!" roared F. like a boatswain in a gale; and we all did our best to cheer on our heroes. A more gallant race has been rarely rowed; and it was far the most beautiful one for the power, grace, steadiness, and finish of the stroke, and for the apparent equality of skill and strength, I have ever seen. Splendidly these sixteen giants, with bare heads and glancing arms, with long sweeping strokes dashed by, and lessening, lessening, up the stream their oars' imperfect rhythm, disappeared around the bend of "Colney Reach." But meanwhile I am leaving myself no time for our visit to Buckingham Palace to present our addresses to the young Duchess Marie. Meeting at Dr. Williams' new library the same party of ministers, with a few others added, took carriages for Westminster. We found ourselves on arriving just preceded by the London and Dublin delegations, very much as at Windsor, and were ushered up the stairway, and through splendid halls and anterooms, to an apartment in which the chief ornaments were two full-length admirable portraits of Napoleon III. and the Empress Eugenie. But my day-dream was broken by the appearance of the scarlet and gold servants and the opening of the gilded folding-doors. The blue gowns of the London delegation and the crimson robes of the Dublin were just vanishing through a side-door to the right. And there before us, at the upper end of the large and splendid reception room, stood Prince Alfred and his bonnie Bride, accompanied by their suite. He was in his full naval-officer's uniform, while she was clad in a richly tinted blue dress fitting high up to the neck. Her hair

was simply dressed, with few or no ornaments, and, so far as a glance indicated, she wore no jewelry or orders. Altogether the effect was highly pleasing from its absence of all show, and elegant plainness. And her look and manner completed the charm, they were so gentle at once and dignified, so self-poised yet deferential. Mr. Martineau headed our group of black-robed, white-banded ministers; but the addresses were read by Professor Drummond and Dr. Sadler. When they began, the Duchess listened courteously, but indifferently, as if to a mere formal and conventional speech. But as her ear caught the tender tone and the beautifully worded sentiments of Mr. Drummond, a sort of flush of surprised emotion passed over her face; and before Dr. Sadler, in a patriarchal and even paternal manner, had closed his benediction, she was so much moved that evidently she found some difficulty to command her feelings. Deeply religious by nature and training, and accustomed to respect the clergy of her own Church, these devout thanksgivings and words of Godspeed went home to her heart, and carried the young girl home again. Even the Duke himself looked flurried as he read the reply from himself and the Duchess. Although the impression left on all of us was that he is an immensely fortunate young fellow to have drawn such a prize in the lottery of life.

If any further light on his position is needed, the letter on Positivism will give it. This letter is printed because it is important. A first draft only has come into my hands, but this doubtless contains every essential idea. Whether, if sent, it was answered, I do not know. What Mr. Harrison replied, if he did reply, can merely be conjectured, though it may be allowable to surmise that he would hardly have fallen back on humanity if he had not felt compelled to abandon the conception of a personal God, and wanted some

living, human substitute as the foundation of his religious emotion. At all events, the letter is interesting as a statement of individual experience, as an illustration of Mr. Channing's attitude, and as an evidence of the power of speculative absorption to overcome logical scruples, the force of the flame to consume the wood. So passionate was the aspiration that criticism was turned to ashes. The wonder is that Mr. Channing remained a rationalist at all; that the rush of his feeling did not carry away in its sweep every vestige of fact. It is the marvel of the man that he continued to the end so much of a thinker and so much of a believer at the same time. Nothing but an absolute faith, such as very few possess, could have resisted the continued pressure of inquiry to which his mind was subjected. His was a hope that made despair impossible, a love that cast out fear. Here is the letter: —

3 CAMPDEN HOUSE ROAD, KENSINGTON, LONDON, W.

May 18, 1879, 10½ P. M.

MY DEAR SIR, — Your lecture of this evening has so profoundly moved me, by at once stimulating my intellect and quickening my feelings, that gratitude to you and fidelity to my own convictions alike prompt me to write while my impressions are fresh. For your statement not only interested me by its comprehensive grasp, logical method, and lucid expression, but charmed me by the glow of its fervent humanity and its devout reverence. And it is exactly because you gave your hearers so much of Real Life that one demands more. But before challenging your position and denying that it is tenable, it is but right, as your own flag flies so boldly on your tower's head, that my own banner should be as freely spread to the breeze. Your present correspondent, then, is a Christian minister,

of the Unitarian communion, — the nephew and biographer of the well-known Dr. William Ellery Channing, of Boston, Mass., U. S. A. The first ministry I ever worked in was a mission among the poor of the crowded city of New York, where my duties afterward brought me into close connection with the criminal classes of that “Modern Babylon,” as secretary of the Prison Discipline Society. From first to last, also, conscience led me to enlist in the grand “Antislavery War,” whereby our Republic has been partially redeemed. And after ten to twenty years of labor in every branch of social, educational, and industrial reform, at length I devoted all my energies of heart, mind, and will to the one true reform of Social Reorganization as taught by the American Union of Associationists, and as put in practice at Brook Farm as one of its best illustrations. Thus my most active manhood was consecrated to the service of humanity with unflagging perseverance, with a hope that never faltered and a trust that no seeming failures could ever dishearten or daunt. So much for your correspondent. And now for Positivism. My acquaintance with your great master’s teachings is not of yesterday, but dates back for thirty-five years, to the autumn of 1844, when in a periodical of which I was editor, in an article on the “Science of Unity,” I wrote thus in regard to Auguste Comte: “The profound studies upon the ‘History of Philosophy’ and the ‘Philosophy of History’ by German and French authors give aid in enabling us to see aright our present position, and the direction in which our inquiries may be turned with best hope of success. Many brilliant generalizations have already been enumerated. Cousin’s definition of the present period, as that of a close relation between the infinite and finite, is full of suggestion. The quite well worn statement that our age is one of reconciliation between Supernaturalism and Naturalism is the same profound thought differently presented. But of all comprehensive portraiture of the intellectual era, per-

haps none has attracted more attention than that of M. Auguste Comte, though he speaks more with the dogmatic tone of the skeptic than with the spirit at once exact and expansive, reverent and poetic, of the true believer, which the true knower must always be." An extract then follows, and begins thus: "Every branch of knowledge passes through three stages: first, the supernatural or fictitious; second, the metaphysical or abstract; third, the positive or scientific." Then comes the sketch of Fetishism and of metaphysical systems, and the passage closes in these words: "In the positive stage the mind, convinced of the futility of all inquiry into causes and essences, applies itself to the observation and classification of the laws which regulate the invariable relations of succession and similitude which all things bear to one another." If you will note the dates, you will observe, that I became a student of Comte from about the time of publication of the first volume of his "*Cours de Philosophie Positive*." And as each of the volumes successively appeared it was eagerly read and earnestly discussed with my friends, Theodore Parker, George Ripley, and O. A. Brownson, till 1854, when I came to England. Since that era, with the exception of some of his strictly mathematical treatises, every word of Comte so far as known to me has been conscientiously studied, and in addition have been read many of the best expositions of his chief scholars in France, such as those of Littré, and of his most distinguished English disciples. I came, then, this evening somewhat prepared to appreciate your lecture, and to listen to its statements, arguments, and illustrations with discriminating judgment. In entire singleness of mind, let me add that nowhere have I met with a more felicitous presentation of the "Religion of Humanity" than was given this evening by yourself. So far as it went, it appeared to me indeed quite complete and perfect in its affirmations. Its great defects were in your negative criticism, which candor compels me

to pronounce in great part narrow, superficial, capricious, and unjust. Your strength was in uncompromising assertion of your own positive convictions. And there the position taken was undeniably commanding. For one, let me own that my reason, heart, and will responded gladly to your earnest appeal and luminous expositions as far as they went. Nothing better could have been desired within your carefully prescribed limit than your demonstration that the Moral Laws of Life must be dominant in every healthful, harmonious, and happy social organization. That part of your lecture was most masterly, and so far my response was a cordial "Yea and Amen." But now comes up my critical challenge. Why did you pull us up and put us down just when we longed to "come up higher"? You opened the portal of your inclosure, and then slammed the gate in our faces. Or rather, to make the point cut keener, you welcomed us up the marble steps of your temple, and then locked and double locked against our entrance its golden doors. That was not fair treatment. There are several problems, yet to be solved, which it is my earnest wish to discuss with you to the bottom, though rather in the way of pacific comparison of views than of barren controversy. And as preliminary and preparing the way for an integral exploration of the whole positive system comes this question: If Humanity is a living organism, of which individual persons are constituent elements, and if the life of humanity is most distinctly manifested in the greatest men and women; and yet further, if in all ages and nations the grandest legislators, philosophers, seers, poets, artists, statesmen, heroes, captains of industry, discoverers, inventors, and practical workers have invariably been religious, what authority have you for conjecturing that humanity has deluded itself and misled its chief directors up to the nineteenth century? Unquestionably throughout its whole career the human race in the measure of its symmetric development has affirmed its consciousness of vital depend-

ence upon some superhuman, extra-human or preter-human Source of Life, and has all but unanimously aspired to be guided and governed by a supremely sovereign power as the essential being of its existence, the genius of its intelligence, the exhaustless fountain head of its existence, its beautiful ideal, its beneficent protector, its all-holy, all-hallowing friend, brother, father, prophet, priest, and monarch, combined in one. There is nothing in the least mystical, vague, or visionary in such a question. It springs directly out of the substantial parts of the historical development of our race; it is suggested by the simplest and most universal common sense of our united humanity; and it is intensely and urgently practical, everywhere, to-day, especially at the great centres of our Christian civilization. Now, as a grateful, reverent, loving, and loyal child of the "grand humanity," as embodied through all ages in the forms of the noblest humanitarians, who have glorified our globe by energetic, devoted, and heroic lives, I put this plain question to you, as a leading representative of Positivism in Great Britain: "On what grounds can the disciples of Auguste Comte assume and justify their claim to be the truest, wisest, bravest, best, and most trustworthy exponents of humanity who have thus far dwelt upon this planet?" You will not deny, but frankly admit, it is taken for granted, that your position is an intolerably arrogant one unless on the strictest scientific basis, and by the most scrupulously observed use of scientific methods, you can prove that the positivist school is the central organ of the heart, mind, and will of universal humanity. But how were you authorized by humanity to announce the astounding dogma that up to the era of Auguste Comte our race had cheated itself and deluded its children? Where are your credentials for such an unprecedented intellectual sway? What is your criterion of infallibility? To what superior court of appeal, beyond your dictation, are we permitted to find access? You profess to be worshippers

of humanity. And yet do you not categorically declare that this grand humanity has for long æons shown itself to be a credulous, bewildered, cowardly, false-hearted fool, up to the advent of your prophet? Is such a position tenable? Is it not self condemned by its own inconsistency? This letter is nowise private, but freely open to your fellow-professors of Positivism, earnest and highly cultivated men as they are admitted to be, and enthusiastically devoted to their world-wide enterprise of establishing throughout mankind the reign of law and liberty made one in perpetual peace. Will some or all of them reveal this mysterious humanity which inspires and illuminates them and prove it to be a Real Being,—a more substantial Personality, a warmer Presence, a more vitalizing Influence, a more beautiful and beneficent, more enlightening and sanctifying, more strengthening and comforting, more lovely and all-loving friend to our toiling, tantalized, struggling, sorrowing, yet heroically advancing, race, than in the God and Father of our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, the Living Head of the Universal Church of Christendom? On the next Sunday evening, it will be my hope and aim to hear Professor Beesly, and perhaps at the close of the lecture we can in a few moments arrange for some subsequent meetings. Trusting that my utterly uncompromising words may attest my respectful confidence in your justice, love of truth, and manly integrity, and earnestly desiring to behold Positivism in the clearest light in which it has appeared to its apostles, believe me yours, in assured hope for humanity,

WILLIAM HENRY CHANNING.

MR. FREDERIC HARRISON,

38 Westbourne Terrace, Hyde Park, London.

When the rage for “Theosophy” broke out some years ago it found him unassailable. Indeed, he used very emphatic language, of which this is a specimen.

Writing to a friend about "Mr. Isaacs," in 1883, he says: "As an interpretation of the 'Higher Buddhism' it is indescribably superficial and ridiculous." He then speaks disrespectfully of Madame Blavatsky and others, of the "Isis Unveiled," of magic and necromancy, and calls the believers in the claims of these men and women to interpret real Buddhism "color-blind for the moment, by the glare of the 'Bengal Lights' shot abroad by these modern tricksters." This old man of seventy-three actually characterizes "Esoteric Buddhism as nonsense," and does so deliberately, on the strength of his reading in the British Museum, his conversations with living scholars, and his son-in-law's long familiarity with Indian philosophy.

Of course, Mr. Channing was an optimist so far as the "one far-off divine event" is concerned. That is, he believed in the entire beneficence of the ultimate purpose. Schopenhauer, Hartmann, and the whole school of pessimists were, in his judgment, fatally wrong.

He did not hold that this was the best actual or the best possible world, for this would have been inconsistent with his active efforts to make it better, as well as with his hopes for the human race. In the interesting reminiscences of Rev. Henry Solly occurs this touching incident, illustrating his own personal feeling:—

When I had been calling on Mr. Channing in Liverpool and he accompanied me on a walk, I knew he was in deep trouble and grief concerning one of his children. I was feeling profound sympathy with him, and at length ventured to say something, to the effect that, though his trouble was very great, our Heavenly Father was making it all work out for good. I shall never forget the sweetness with

which he answered, and the serene smile of happiness and perfect trust which lighted up his whole face while he was answering, "Yes, yes, I know it is all right there." It was the same wonderful depth and fullness of absolute trust in a loving Father which most impressed me twenty years later in the last conversation on earth I was permitted to have with him.

On June 3, 1879, as president of the Taylerian Society, formed by Unitarians to commemorate Rev. John James Tayler, who died in May, 1869, he delivered an inaugural address on "Christian Optimism transforming Agnostic Pessimism," from which a passage illustrative of this point is taken : —

With awful reverence, yet serenest trust and unfaltering hope, let us rather feel than think, and think than utter the open secret : "Divine Love cannot but make its own the accumulated uses of all creatures." The Christian believer who is borne to earth with overwhelming gratitude, under the pathetic thought that once on Calvary the Infinite Majesty endured the uttermost of human grief, falls immeasurably short of the reality. By the fact of creation, the All Father has sealed his everlasting promise that all shall be good. But while love is the essence of good, its law of life is spiritual freedom. In calling into existence beings endowed with germs of his own love, wisdom, beauty, and blessedness, the living God freely and deliberately accepted the conditions of that law of loving liberty whereby he lives himself. Thus comes to every enlightened and awakened spirit the assurance that evil is relative, not absolute ; transient, not everlasting ; always a means, but never an end ; and with this assurance opens the glorious prospect of growing good, casting out evil as opening buds shake off their husks. Growth, then, is the grand solution of the problem. If evil can be transformed in part, then shall it utterly disappear.

So plain a statement as this may seem to be sufficient; but as the point is important, I venture to quote from a series of notes on the general subject:—

The All Good accepts evil as condition of good, and freely chooses it; voluntarily submits himself to it, to share its burdens, to soothe its woes, to reconcile its struggles.

Evil is the great purifier of self-love, the crucible, the seething-vat, the bleachery, the assay-table, the scales, the tuning-fork.

Evil is the bond of mutual help and sympathy, and coöperation and beneficence.

Evil is the training-school of athletics, the gymnasium, the educator, the discipliner of heroes. It is the cradle of gentle suffering, the garden bed of lowliness.

We must discern the true end, not enjoyment, not honor or distinction, not fulfilled selfish ideals. But to live for God's glory, the All Perfect, Good, True, Beautiful; to live for others.

A letter to his friend, Mr. Clarke, written long before this, gives voice to his fixed feeling:—

RONDOUT, October 10, 1852.

DEAR JAMES, — Did I ever tell you that the last time I saw your sweet Herman was, as he stood in the sunshine on the doorstep, holding out to me Plato's "Divine Dialogues"? It was but a few days before his death. Ever since, I seem to see him in an open portal where the glory streams all over him, reaching forth the "Phædo," with a light as of the skies in his mild blue eyes and his lips half parted. Have you heard that our darling little Mary has been taken home by the angels? It was on Friday afternoon at three o'clock, just two weeks since. She was lying in her mother's lap before the southwestern window, looking out into the glowing sunshine and softest air fanning her; we were kneeling round her, and the words of the prayer, "or else receive her into heavenly habitations," were be-

ing spoken, when with a soft sigh the spirit left the body. I cannot tell you, my friend, how awful was the beauty of this departure. It was as if the glisten of angels' wings were round us, as thus with instant answer to our prayer the new-born soul was welcomed from amidst earthly into heavenly glory. It seemed a desecration of the holy hour to sob or shed a tear, so manifest was the translation to a brighter world. How many thoughts have come to me through the watchings of the long six weeks during which our gay, vigorous, radiant child was becoming transformed into a thoughtful, patient angel, whose deep blue eyes seemed to penetrate the hidden secrets of our hearts with their loving wisdom! I have felt my utter unworthiness to be a parent; my wonder that Heaven could ask me as its instrument to usher thus an angel into existence; a mournful consciousness that it was well she had so early exchanged our clumsy kindness for the refined assiduities of heavenly society; a sublime confidence that the ties relationship formed on earth typify everlasting affinities; a congratulation that this golden incense cup was found fit for use without long trial in the furnace; a new sense of the nearness, warmth, and sympathy of the spiritual world, etc., etc. But above all have I been impressed with a truth, singularly slighted, as it seems to me, — namely, that God is the fellow-sufferer with the whole creation and every creature. How is it that the Church has taught the impassibility of the Divine Being, except in one instance? Does not the All-Knowing recognize the faintest thrill of agony in the animalcule dashed in froth to die upon the sands of every shore, as well as the awful wrestlings of all saintly souls to lose all thought and will of self in an infinite benignity? There is a mystery of mercy hidden in pain, sin, and sorrow, which we scarcely dare to dream of. God foresaw, forechose, the one inseparable condition of creating, — that the Infinite must make itself wholly one with the Finite in the innumerable, incessant, endless varieties of

discord, whereby only could a harmony be evolved, rich, exhaustless, ever fresh, as his own eternal peace. The Creator has subjected no creature to experiences which He is not joyfully ready to make his own. He bears the burden of all trial with a serene and smiling patience, which from forever to forever chants, "It shall all be well, — it is all well, it is very good;" and in the very contrast of our ideal aspirations with actual limitations is the pledge of our Father, that every spirit shall in time acknowledge what He from eternity intuitively knows, how infinitely blessed is every creature. As I gazed on the sufferings of my little child, so utterly undeserved, so wholly unintelligible to her, it became clear that my sympathy must be as nothing compared with God's, and that the Divine Being himself was present in every pain to bear it fully, and thus by an infinite love incessantly active to work a spiritual miracle by which that little spirit should become transformed into the glorious likeness of his own love. Here is the one consolation for all sorrow, an all-sufficing one, the only sufficient one. And instantly, when apprehended, that truth transmutes all sighs and groans into a psalm of praise and anthem of thanksgiving. But it is hard, very hard, "to keep the heights the soul is competent to gain;" and for me, with my sensitive organization, I am prone every moment to forget, in the friction, jar, conflict, of the passing day, the ocean of bliss amidst which the years and centuries roll on in harmonious orbits. But I mar by my imperfect statement this magnetic reality of the divine impartation and participation of all experiences.

Yours, ever,

W. H. C.

On May 21, 1879, he contributed an article to the "Daily Telegraph," under the editorial care of his son-in-law, Edwin Arnold, questioning the notion that the world was sadder than it used to be, and claiming that heroism, charity, humanity, kindness, compas-

sion, manliness, were on the increase. In this confidence he lived. To no man were the words of the favorite hymn more applicable.

“ In every joy that crowns my days,
In every pain I bear,
My heart shall find delight in praise,
Or seek relief in prayer.”

His casual notes overflowed with devout recognition of the Living God. His hours were spent in efforts to bring the Divine Presence near to the hearts of men.

The old reforms took on new applications as the years went by. The “Jubilee Singers” kept alive his concern for the African race. His studies on intemperance in Great Britain stimulated him to fresh exertions in the cause. As for socialism, the necessity of a complete reorganization as the only solution of the social problem became more and more clear to him, with each year’s observation. The sequel to the “Franco-Prussian” war confirmed all his convictions. At first his whole sympathy was with the Germans. He exulted in the downfall of Napoleon III., the “Savior of Society,” supposing that the land of Lessing, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Goethe, Jean Paul, Novalis, would show a zeal for social freedom, for poetic justice, for humanity.

But as gradually it became plain that the German military caste, with Bismarck and his cohort of intriguers, had carefully for years prepared to spring this mine, and as the whole outside of Europe recognized with a shudder that the real meaning of the cruel strife was to rear a vast central military despotism upon the fragments of ruined France, one became heart-sick at the hideous crime against the humanity, social order, historic conscience, ideal hopes and spiritual aims of the whole age.

The "Commune" was, in his eyes, but a ghastly travesty of popular equity.

In such an hour as this let us not be so ingrate as to forget the immense debt that humanity owes to France. And let us be discriminate in apportioning our blame among the agents of these insane deeds; and yet more in tracing out the causes of this outburst of madness. For be it always remembered there is a glorious truth, yes! many most noble principles and impulses, at work amidst the effort of Paris to assert her right of self-government. . . . The true "animus" of this infernal strife is the universal war between Capital and Labor, privilege and the people. And this will be the condemnation of the future against the true originators and exasperators of this infernal Civil War, which dates back to 1848 at least, if not to 1793. It is true that in the very hour of awful suffering, humiliation, and life-and-death struggle, when common trials should have taught fellow-feeling, and when common efforts to save France should have inspired universal coöperation, class jealousies, class hates, the hellish scramble of class interests, broke out, even while peace was being proclaimed. And who will be held chiefly to blame for this by some Livy or Tacitus of France, hereafter? Assuredly those who, having enjoyed all means of culture, discipline, refinement, and really holding the keys of power in wealth and position, refused to open the doors of a happier because juster future, and slammed and locked them in the faces of the poor.

That his faith was in spiritual religion appears from a very long letter to Keshub Chunder Sen, written in December, 1870.

When the protest against vivisection was made he threw himself with zeal into that reform, tried to awaken interest in it among his New England friends, and suggested the establishment of an agency for the sale of the society's publications in Boston.

The discussion of the "Alabama Claims" called from him a letter to the "Times," in which he endeavored to correct the mutual misunderstanding of the two nations, and to avert strife.

In the winter of 1871 he delivered a course of four lectures at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, on "The Laws of Human Life as Revealed in History." The first lecture was on Art; the second was on Culture; the third was on Society; the fourth was on Ethics. The lecturer was ill at the time; so ill, he says, that he "could scarcely sit up, or stand to speak." But the disability was not noticed, apparently. The reports were enthusiastic. He liked the plan himself, and proposed to write the lectures out "some day, Heaven willing." Heaven was not willing, for very imperfect notes only remain.

His letters to his family, his wife, his children, his grandchildren, are full to overflowing of affection. When he was with them his happiness was complete. He was merry, playful, heartily sympathetic. When he was away from them, as he often was weeks and months at a time, on his preaching expeditions at Sheffield or Leeds, his correspondence was incessant. His praise of Edwin Arnold as a writer, editor, philanthropist, poet, of his statesmanlike editorials, his political influence, his justice, his humanity, was constant. When his son was graduated at Oxford his father thus exultingly writes about the event: —

Frank's essay was read by him in the theatre of the University, with great success, before a very large and splendid assembly. . . . Does it not seem like a dream that the young boy, racing his "2.40" round the lawn at Brattleboro, should have stood as the "man of mark" of his year at Oxford before that brilliant literary assembly?

. . . The essay is a most masterly performance, . . . the most mature performance for a youth that I remember to have seen.

The writer of it went to Belgium in 1869 to rest from work. The same spring he was engaged to be married, to his father's entire satisfaction and delight. The youth is now a member of Parliament. Whatever allowance his children may be disposed to make for a father's affection, all must acknowledge his unfailing sincerity, his consideration for all men. He was ever a gentleman, ever chivalrous, courteous, kind, and thoughtful, combining the utmost firmness of conviction with uniform politeness and modesty.

Thus, the abode in England was fortunate. This was the place for one of his ardent, speculating, idealizing temper. The heavy background of history, the ancient order, the venerable institutions, the ripe, mellow scholarship, the accumulated treasures of literature and art, served as a make-weight to his fiery earnestness; while its magnificent libraries, schools, societies of learning and charity, ministered sumptuously to his mind, and its finished society warmed and fed his heart.

XV.

THE AMERICAN.

WILLIAM HENRY CHANNING was an American, always an American, an American of Americans, not merely because he was born in America, and had there all his blood relatives, but because America came nearest to his ideal in personal freedom, in opportunity, in elasticity of movement. He was always studying American problems. He caught at the latest news from home. He held regular correspondence with his mother as long as she lived, and then with his sisters. His letters to friends were numerous and long. On his seventy-third birthday he wrote from London : —

Then, again, is there a spot upon earth where, if choice had been granted in advance, we could wish to be born in preference to the heart of New England, the glorious old Bay State? Never yet has it been permitted to me to visit any community so rich in the grandest types of true "children of God," amid scenes as fitted to call out and mature the most commanding attributes of mind and character. Verily our destiny has fallen to us in pleasant places, as nearly approaching to "Paradise Regained" as our dear planet has yet witnessed.

He loved to think of himself as a "Boston boy," and would speak the words with a heartiness that brought to mind every fine promise. Emerson inscribed an ode to him, calling him, "The evil times' sole patriot."

His passages between England and America were very frequent: sometimes for a summer, sometimes for a winter, sometimes, as in the period of the war, for several years. He must have crossed the ocean fifteen times or more. The voyages were not usually marked by any peculiar incident. But the trip back — he always came alone — in November of 1877, by the *City of Berlin*, deserves to be recorded as especially disastrous. He had hurried to catch the vessel, and on reaching his comfortable state-room his bosom swelled with grateful memories and bright anticipations. The start was favorable, and when the steward prophesied a good voyage every heart responded pleasantly. But in mid-ocean, many hundred miles from the coast of Ireland, the shaft broke, the sails served only to aid the ship in lying to, and the vessel simply drifted, at the rate of four miles an hour, towards England. No large steamer came along to rescue the imprisoned passengers and speed them towards their desired haven. On the afternoon of December 2d — the accident occurred on November 29th — a temporary rudder was rigged to keep them before the wind, and they went slowly on. The wind blew; the sea was rough; the peril was incessant. But the passengers were calm, and the officers were serene. There were anxious hearts on either shore; for the storm was fearful in England, and there were no tidings of the belated ship.

On the morning of December 9th the *City of New York* took them in tow and carried them to Queens-town. It would have taken them all the way to Liverpool, but the wind came up and blew a gale, the danger to the two great boats was imminent, and the captain of the *City of Berlin* decided to trust him-

self to tugs which had been sent to his help. The pull was tremendous. Two of the hawsers broke, and they came near being dashed in pieces on the coast of Wales. But this peril was surmounted, thanks to the other hawser ; the " bar " at the mouth of the Mersey was passed, and the port was reached in safety.

Mr. Channing's description of the voyage, the accident, the behavior of the ship, the steam-tugs, the deliverance, the arrival, the conduct of all on board, is most vivid, and should be printed in full, but for want of room to do the situation justice. What is very uncommon was his cheerful courage, his sweet patience, his happy resignation, his grateful devoutness, his thoughtfulness of all who loved him, his tender wishes for the happiness of others, and his heart-felt acceptance of the mischance as a providential appointment. There was no shadow of doubt about this, and his attitude was true to this belief.

And in the midst of the tumult he had an eye for natural beauty.

In fact [he said], if it were not for my sympathy with our anxious friends on shore (and a sense of our own tantalizing delays, balanced, however, by deepening gratitude), I should declare emphatically that never have I enjoyed a voyage so much. The cloud effects at sunrise, sunset, and during passing gusts and showers, have been surpassingly magnificent; and to-day the seas are purple blue with snowy crests, and drift sparkling in the sun like diamond dust; and where to the southward the curling billows curve before bursting, the light through their transparent summits transmutes them to emerald, and the air is deliciously invigorating and stimulating.

There were agreeable companions, too, on board : a

Southerner, with whom he discussed the war, and a circus rider, who amused him with telling his experiences. A few only knew the danger they were in; but he knew it, and he was sure that if his "bark sunk it was to another sea."

In the autumn of 1869, he came to Boston to deliver a course of lectures on the "Progress of Civilization" before the Lowell Institute. These lectures, twelve in number, cost him enormous labor. For months, with his usual patience, thoroughness, and zeal, he worked every day in the British Museum, from ten in the morning till five in the afternoon, reading, copying, making abstracts, afterwards walking home through Kensington Gardens, enjoying the singing of the thrushes in the old trees. But his toil was full of joy. For he sought to prove the universality of the Divine revelation, the ceaseless activity of the perfect love. The course consisted of twelve lectures, delivered on Friday evening of each week, from October 22, 1869, to January 7, 1870. They were unwritten, the speaker bringing books and notes with him. They could not but be interesting from the presence, manner, and kindling enthusiasm of the orator, but they lost much of their effect on the audience through the excess of material, the necessity of reading quotations, and the lack of condensed simplicity in the treatment. The lecturer undertook to go over a great deal of ground, and was consequently obliged to omit and generalize, and slur distinctions. Often he injured his argument by over-statement, or blinded by dazzling. The first discourse was on the "Philosophy of History;" the second was on "History, Aryan and Hindu;" the third was on "China;" the fourth was on "Buddhism;" the fifth was about

"Persia;" the sixth treated of "Hellas;" the seventh of "Rome and the Romans;" then came "Egypt;" after that "The Hebrews;" "Mediæval Christendom" occupied two evenings; and the whole series was closed by an address on "Religion." The notes were voluminous. Here they are, so many little bundles, fragmentary, illegible, many in pencil, often mere allusions or references to books that are difficult to obtain. The scheme, looked at as a whole, in connection with Mr. Channing's habitual thought, was simple. His theory was that all the religions of the earth, as well those that had no bibles as those that had, were essentially the same, — communications to men of divine truth, revelations from the Eternal Spirit. The great sages had them; the Roman philosophers shared them. God had never left the world without a spiritual witness of himself. It was necessary only to seek, to penetrate below the surface, to remove the rubbish of corruption. In this his view was peculiar. The older faiths did not lead up to Christianity, as precursors and preparatives; they, as originally given, contained all its fundamental conceptions. Christianity possessed the advantage of being the last, of being a modern system, of having a development in a historical period, of exhibiting a traceable course, but it brought nothing new. Socrates was one of his "holy sages." The writings of Marcus Aurelius were always on his table. To an English friend, dying, he quoted from Epictetus. At the end of a sermon on the "Immortal Life," preached at Leeds in 1876, he repeated a "sublime passage" from the same old pagan.

Here is his conception of Buddha, taken from one of the note-books: —

My conviction is entire that the pure, primitive, original doctrine of Gautama Sakya-Muni was the worship of Adi-Buddha as God above all gods, Divine above all divinities, as the essential and eternal life in itself; and that he was so overwhelmed with the consciousness of the ineffable perfections of this Spirit of spirits that he did not presume to name him, or to represent him to his own spiritual imagination or to the imaginations of others. It was enough for him, while leaving aside the whole world of divinities and gods, as recognized by his countrymen, though not coarsely or harshly condemning the popular faith and rituals, to declare that he and his followers worshiped no such beings; but reserved their adoration, reverence, obedience, and love for the Being of beings, the Good of good, the Truth of truth, the Life of life, who manifested himself in the human spirit as the nameless, ineffable, inconceivable Buddha, the essential, intelligent, loving Spirit in itself.

Thus he speaks of the famous doctrine of Nirvana:

The metaphysical truth in the doctrine is that Nirvana is the "Nirvritti" state as the opposite of the "Pracriti" state. That is, it is the ideal spiritual state, which manifests itself in the actual natural state.

The moral truth in the doctrine is that Nirvana is the fellowship of the glorified ones, by charity, illumination, and self-sacrifice, — a real communion of saints alike on earth and in heaven.

The religious truth in it is that the glorified saint who loses self-love and self-will and self-enjoyment in heavenly disinterestedness becomes livingly, interiorly, existentially, one with the absolute, infinite, eternal Essence, the Being of beings.

Mr. Channing protests against the ideas of atheism and annihilation as associated with Buddhism, and affirms continually and fervently a resemblance to Christianity in all primitive beliefs, his spiritual

intensity leading him sometimes to insert his own creed into the ancient phrases. Thus, in another manuscript he says: "The faith of all the true saints of all ages and nations is one, and the revelation of the Divine Being is one, and one in threefold degrees of being, — might be set forth so as to reconcile the controversies of centuries."

In 1872 he proposed to publish the texts he had collected from many books for these lectures: —

For from these texts it will appear [he said], without a word of argument, that the central and essential principles of holiness, rectitude, purity, mercy, hope, trust, sacrifice, aspiration, have been communicated, taught, and practiced among the people of all times and lands. And thus it will be recognized that the human race, through all successive generations, has been as it now is the family of one Father in a common home.

The reasons why, in his estimation, this primitive revelation became obscured, perverted, all but obliterated in after times, are summed up in the essay on the "Religions of China," given before the "Free Religious Association" in May, 1870, and printed among its "Proceedings." It was issued in the form of a pamphlet as a contribution to the controversy then raging in regard to the Chinese, and curiously illustrates Mr. Channing's failure to perceive the natural adjustment of means to ends. The reasons given are: (1) the Civil Wars of the early period; (2) the effects of barbarian invasions; and (3) the "influence of scientific skepticism over that very scholar-class which should have kept clean and full the fountains of religious life." This influence was what he chiefly dreaded. He was attracted to the Free Religious Association by his love of liberty and

by its fundamental idea of the "Sympathy of Religions." That was his own idea, his favorite conception. Three times he stood on its platform and uttered himself. But the predominance of the rationalizing spirit there disturbed him, and the speculative audacity called, he thought, for a protest. To the president of the association he addressed a friendly remonstrance against the tendency towards pantheism, naturalism, materialism, he had discovered. One of the members, he said, doubted of the personal God; another spoke slightly of the immortality of the soul; a third questioned the intuition of the moral law. On the last occasion, in 1880, as the representative of Dr. Channing, he made an earnest plea for "Christianity," predicting that a deeper study would carry the officers of the Association into the Church. For this, he contended, was the legitimate consequence of perfect freedom. He treated with derision the notion that Christianity culminated in Romanism; but when, one day, I spoke with admiration of Etienne Vacherot, the French philosopher, he gave evidence of his dislike of rationalism. He felt that he had a mission to promulgate his conception of Christianity as the living communication of God to the soul. Had he been possessed of humor as he was of eloquence, near to popular sympathies, able to carry the multitude along with him, to make them laugh or cry, to sway their moods, he would have succeeded better than he did in spreading his own intense convictions.

It was his wish and expectation to repeat the Lowell Lectures, one or all, in various towns. But the anticipation had little fulfillment. There is no record of their delivery at that time as a course, though separate lectures were given in Brookline, Cambridge,

Dorchester, and in private parlors. There is reason to believe that some of them were appreciated by competent judges. Dr. Hedge heard at least two of them, and said to the speaker:—

I heard with very great interest, last Thursday, your lecture in Cambridge on the Persians. I think I enjoyed it more than any of your lectures which I have heard, except perhaps the one last Sunday evening here [in Brookline] on China. What I especially admired in this about the Persians was the historic sense displayed first in the exposition of the fundamental ideas of the Iranian people, and then in the unfolding of the Persian history. . . . I sympathize with you in your historic optimism, and on the whole am ready to subscribe to your view of the ancient Persian mind.

Many years after, in the summer of 1880, the material of which these lectures were composed was used by him in four discourses before the summer school of philosophy at Concord, Mass., on "Oriental and Mystical Philosophy." The third of the series, on "True Buddhism," is said to have been peculiarly interesting; so enthusiastic, indeed, that the speaker was asked in what respect Buddhism differed essentially from Christianity. Mr. Channing's answer is not given. But he might have replied that there was no essential difference; that both had the same origin; that Christianity was easier to get at; that it was adapted to modern men; that it was "Western" in its development; that we were born into it, and through it can arrive at the Source of Spiritual Life directly. His addresses at Concord were longer than usual, and there were signs that he was a little disconcerted by the abstract, intellectual character of the discussions, and by his want of suc-

cess in enlisting the assembled sages in the project he had so much at heart, of disseminating widely his views of truth. He was ready to be an apostle of the new faith. They were not ready to enter on this kind of propagandism. They had neither the means nor the inclination for it. This indeed was not their purpose. Still he had a delightful time. He met his old mates. He talked on congenial themes. He took part in colloquies. He told his experiences. The newspapers of the day recorded his words and made note of his presence. There was his friend Bronson Alcott, and his mother's friend Miss E. P. Peabody, and good Transcendentalists by the dozen. There he heard about Plato, and St. John, and Boehme, and Swedenborg, and Kant, and Shakespeare, and Woman, and Charity, and Art, and the Psychic Body, and the Education of Man, and Spiritualism, and Immortality, in forty lectures beside his own. The "Concord School" interested him greatly from the beginning, and awoke high expectations. In 1880 he wrote: —

Even the worldling will muse, as he walks away under the arcades of elms, and looks across the verdant meadows serenely slumbering in the sun: "What can be the magic charm that draws that golden-haired blonde of some nineteen summers from San Francisco, and that dark-eyed, Greek-featured, almost sternly severe student of ethics from St. Louis, and this substantial, gray-haired New England farmer's wife, — so plain in attire, so truthful in look, speech, manner, — to find their holiday refreshment in studying Aristotle and Hegel and the 'Dialectic Method' under the skillful interpretation of Professor W. T. Harris?" . . . One fact is clear: that the newspapers, which rather patronized, half pitied, and rallied with good-natured mockery the "Concord Philosophers," last summer, devote

long columns to a report of their sayings and doings this season. Even the somewhat supercilious and coolly critical of them grant the Concord School is leading in the right direction, as surely it is.

He was the guest of "the dear, blessed Emersons," of whom he speaks in most affectionate terms; describing Mrs. E. in her flower garden, Mr. E. among his books, "lovely as ever," with his "beaming smile, better than any speech," and Miss E., "the confidante and guardian of her silver-haired parents."

This was an exceedingly busy period. In January the class of 1829 had its annual dinner. There were thirty present out of sixty graduates. His speech was the longest of the occasion and one of its features. "We will meet in the morning," seems to have been the burden of his message.

The Boston Association of Ministers claimed him. In April there was a great celebration in New York of the passage of the XVth Amendment to the Constitution, securing the right of suffrage to the blacks. The largest hall in the city was crammed. There was loud rejoicing; processions occupied the streets; festivities expressed the delight of the colored people; Wendell Phillips surpassed himself; Frederick Douglass drew tears from many eyes as he described the new earth; Lucretia Mott dropped the dew of her blessing; Julia Ward Howe then read a kindling poem. For two Sundays thanks were given in the African churches; prayers were offered; hymns were sung; pæans were raised. Of course Mr. Channing said his glowing word.

On May 16th, the "Woman's Club" kept the sixty-sixth birthday of Miss Elizabeth P. Peabody, when

he gave a sketch of her as he first saw her at Lancaster : —

It was a bright May sunset ! Walking westward into the light, between two older friends, with eyes downcast on the ground as she listened earnestly to their counsel, appeared a young girl of sixteen. She was fair and bright-cheeked, with brown hair neatly parted on her forehead, and rather slight and graceful in form and movement, so that I remember thinking how good and pure and gentle, and even beautiful, she looked, with the soul shining all through her, and the light pouring all over face and figure as she moved.

This was the key-note of a warm tribute.

On the 23d of May, the women consecrated the hours to the memory of Margaret Fuller Ossoli. James Freeman Clarke presided, F. H. Hedge spoke ; then W. H. Channing, then T. W. Higginson, then C. P. Cranch, then Elizabeth P. Peabody, then Marcus and Rebecca Spring. “ Altogether . . . it was one of the most richly suggestive and wholly satisfactory meetings I have ever attended.”

Then came Decoration Day, with floods of memories and touching associations. Then, in Anniversary Week, at the Berry Street Conference, he “ poured out his heart ” to the Unitarians, trying to “ utter my soul, just as if we were all in the World of Light, before the presence of God and the angels.” What he said may safely be left to conjecture. But I am anticipating.

On the 6th of December, 1879, John T. Sargent opened his parlors on Chestnut Street to the friends of Mr. Channing. There were R. W. Emerson, Samuel Longfellow, D. A. Wasson, Julia Ward Howe, and a great many beside. John Weiss read an essay

on "Constancy to an Ideal," and Mr. Channing responded in language of felicity and of earnestness, regretting the absence of Sumner, Phillips, Garrison, and tenderly bewailing Theodore Parker, John Brown, and Margaret Fuller, who could not come. The essay woke solemn thoughts of lost opportunities, vanishing illusions, dreams of judgment. He had always been an idealist, and his one vision had been that of a kingdom of God upon earth. That vision was heavenly, always true, but never so manifestly true as now, when disputes about labor and capital were agitating the whole world, when the theories of enthusiasts were proving themselves to be practical verities, of the utmost importance in throwing light into dark places, and in solving problems that were perplexing economists. For his part, his confidence in the final triumph of the principles of association was confirmed by all he saw around him. The speech was brave, cheerful, onward-looking, quite as much so as Mr. Emerson's that followed. The essay of Mr. Weiss stirred him "to the very quick and core." He "poured out" his "heart." It was a period of inspiration. Weiss is justly described as "the man gifted with the richest genius of any man among the Unitarian ministers," and his paper "was wonderfully eloquent, a prose-poem, so crowned with magnificent thoughts, clothed in luxuriant beauty of expression, that we felt as if lost in some tropical wilderness, where the very trees are laden down with twining vines, and earth, forest, creepers all abloom with fragrant blossoms, till the air is surfeited with sweetness."

In February, 1870, he attended another meeting of the Radical Club, and heard an essay on "Theism" by Samuel Longfellow.

It was sweet, pure, bright with soft radiance as a lily wand in the hand of an angel. It seemed to me, while he read, as if I were strolling all alone, beside a murmuring rivulet in a wood, and gathering violets, lilies of the valley, "epigæa," and all lowly perfume-breathing wild-flowers; while above, through the golden arabesque of interlacing boughs, fell the noiseless shower of sun-drops, and on the dappled grass beneath my feet lay circlets of splendor each imaging the sun, and through the noiseless solitude there passed a whisper: "Be still! and know that I am God!" A spirit of serene holiness seemed to flow through the whole company.

After the discussion, he went to see David Scott's picture of Emerson, which he found "quite too heroic." "This is not the Emerson I knew. . . . He is to me, of all men I have ever known, an influence of impersonal, impartial, absolute truth. . . . My Apollo is not the Python-slayer, but the leader of the Muses, with a crown of bay-leaves and wreathed lyre."

In February, 1870, there was a meeting in favor of women's suffrage, presided over by James Freeman Clarke, at which, of course, he made an admirable speech, animated by his faith in the cause, his reverence for his mother, and his affection for his old friend. There was an antislavery convention in the same month, when Wendell Phillips and William Channing stood side by side, and spoke to the same purpose. The discussion turned on a proposal that Congress give land and protection in its cultivation to the enfranchised negro. This scheme Mr. Phillips and Mr. Channing both advocated with characteristic eloquence, though the project was open to criticism in its financial as in its general political aspects. On a Sunday afternoon, at Horticultural Hall, he delivered

a discourse on the coming religion, developing his favorite idea of unity. He spoke of the geographical unity of the race; the Burlingame treaty; the growing aspirations of mankind; the mission of America as the grand mediator, peacemaker, reconciler, among the nations. He then passed in review the religious systems of the Oriental peoples, showing their genius and their limitations, yet indicating their common ground of harmony. The speaker declared that he found as yet no credible creed in Christendom, but discovered everywhere a growing credence, an unfolding gospel, a developing theology. He thought that the fullest, freest, amplest, noblest expression of the truth that God is infinitely social, and has infinite ways of manifesting himself, was to be found in the writings of Swedenborg. He rejected the notion that Jesus was excluded by his grandeur, and insisted on his being regarded as the friend and brother of the lowliest. The new call, he asserted, was to put behind us the divisions of Christendom, and feel that we are children of the living God; that this life is the principle of all goodness, genius, and power; that he is at once the origin of our dearest, inner joy, of our spiritual peace, of our triumphant justification, of our final glorification and union with himself. The doctrines of divine, indwelling grace; the presence of the Father in humanity through the Son; the spirit of universal, impartial, all-pardoning, all-redeeming love; the living, organizing principle not only of the Christian Church in all ages, but of all churches in the heathen nations, were earnestly enunciated. The belief in perpetual inspiration, in a constant influx of light and love from above, was closely consequent on these. In closing, the lecturer uttered the "word

for the hour," — a church embodied in society; not a system of creeds, rituals, litanies, but a church of impartial equity and love, of organized humanity, a real family of God on earth. The whole discourse was an impassioned reaffirmation of the faith which had burned in him for a generation, which had deepened with years, observation, experience, in which he lived, for which he labored as very few men did, and by which he was nerved to extraordinary exertions of duty. How much an ardent temperament had to do with creating or perpetuating the faith cannot be determined, but so much is certain; temperament and faith worked together, and the result was a unique and singularly fascinating individuality, a character poetic and spiritual, such as the world seldom sees. The man was all of a piece. Both temperament and faith were exuberant, strong, buoyant. A different nature must conceive the universe differently. Such a conception of the universe might not, even if it could be entertained, so exalt the general soul. But that it did so once is a source of gratitude. His faith may be the faith of thousands.

In 1877 he came again. Except that the visit was made in the summer, when vacation time scattered people, it was a repetition, in the main, of the last one. There was the same enthusiasm, the same going to and fro, the same copious delivery, the same testimony to influence, the same excitement of expectation, the same thanksgiving to the "All Good." He attended commencements at Cornell and Harvard, walked in a Phi Beta Kappa procession, greeted his classmates, drove over hills, gazed on ocean and bay and river, rambled about the old scenes of his boyhood, revived his youthful impressions, and wished

himself back again in his native land. He went to Concord, preached and lectured there with great applause, was the guest of Emerson.

Dear R. W. E. was himself awaiting me, with his own vehicle, at the station. How very kind they are! . . . Mr. E. read at my request some of his own poems, and several of his favorites from "Parnassus," selecting "Ichabod" as his specimen of Whittier. He read also, with great spirit, Stedman's "Old John Brown of Osawatomie," and Bret Harte's "Chicago." He talked more of his own habits of composition than I ever heard of before, and showed me some of the note-books in which, year by year, through all his life, he has habitually written down, in the most perfect form in which they presented themselves, thoughts as they came to him. At the end of the volume indices are made of the subjects. So when an essay is to be written on any theme, he refers to the page of his index where the theme is treated, and copies out his record. These note-books are his "Sketches" and "Drawings," his "Herbarium," or rather his "Nursery for Seedlings." It was surprising to notice, as he turned the pages, how few were the erasures or corrections. From this most interesting talk, I became more convinced than ever that Emerson prizes his poems much more highly than his prose writings, wherein I do most cordially agree with him. Yet such is not the estimation of some of his literary compeers. . . . At my request, he read most deliciously that wonderful poem of "Uriel" which always has appeared to me to be one of the profoundest and most characteristic manifestations of his mysticism. Then turning to the "Sphinx," some stanzas of which he read with resonant tone, he smiled and said: "James Lowell urged me strongly to omit the lines beginning

Dull Sphinx, Jove keep thy five wits,
Thy sight is growing blear.

But on reading them over again, it was clear to me that

there they were, and must stay." And he looked as if he felt that he was heeding a higher behest in so deciding. With all his gentleness, our friend is most tenacious. Mrs. E. has a wonderful memory, and can repeat by the hour all she has ever read with interest. And as her nights are wakeful, she quiets herself by repeating long poems.

Emerson went to sermon and lecture. Then on Monday evening there was a talk before a large company of about sixty. Mr. Alcott spoke of the Ideal of Heavenly Human Life, which furnished Mr. Channing an opportunity to give "full sweep to the tide of inspiration that poured through" him. He availed himself of it to such an extent that even Mr. Emerson was almost carried away, saying, as they were left alone:—

This was truly grand. Both your sermon and your address were excellent, but this entirely surpassed them. In the fullness, richness, order of the thought, and in the felicity of its expression, it could not have been improved.

The speaker in all sincerity replied that he was an instrument only of the Spirit, but was persuaded that he was an instrument.

Here is a testimony to Whittier, on whom he urged an issue, in a distinct volume, of his specially religious poems:—

He is an angel of a man, so simple, sweet, strong for the right, clear in conviction, unquailing, yet humble and gentle, fond of little children, loving the society of young girls and women.

At the Norfolk Conference of Ministers, which met in Milton during the late autumn, and at King's Chapel on the Sunday following, he presented his doctrine of immortality with extraordinary power and success. This was one of his "wonderful experi-

ences of visitation," real "seasons of inspiration." Influx, growth, personality, communion, — these were the points dwelt upon, and with an eloquence that fairly lifted the hearers to a spiritual region.

He went to see Mr. R. H. Dana, at Manchester.

As I entered, the sun fell over his long silvery locks and beard, hanging down upon his shoulders and breast, and gave him a look of almost transparent spirituality as he smiled on me with his soft blue eyes, and extended his white hand in welcome. He was very bright and cheerful, and talked with his old grace and gentle enthusiasm, pointing out his favorite spots of picturesque beauty, and discussing literary and political topics. He is an ardent Republican, and altogether he seemed hopeful of the prospects of the Republic.

In Washington, in October, he took part in the dedication of the "Miner School," and thus he describes it: —

How little did I dream when, years and years ago, at Rochester, I met, one evening, a young, keen-eyed, thin-cheeked, pallid, yet elastic and fire-souled girl, of slight figure, and seemingly frail in health, and heard her scheme of organizing a school for black children, right under the shadow of the dome of the Capitol in Washington, in order that she might prove to our statesmen the latent capacities and powers of the enslaved Africans, and even then dared to encourage her to carry out her bold enterprise, of what wonderful success her magnanimous efforts were to achieve! True, she was hooted and howled at; she was pelted with stones, as were her children; her house was set on fire, and she with her own hands quenched the conflagration; she was forced to buy a pistol and practice firing at a mark, and once, at midnight, scared away some sneaking scoundrels who threatened to break into her dwelling, by blazing away in the dark; and finally she was threatened with a horse-

whip by a young Virginian, who insulted her before her assembled school, and whom she fairly cowed by her dauntless courage and cutting irony. She capped her arch by triumphantly dying, utterly exhausted, leaving her work seemingly incomplete. But now, at length, the most spacious, elegant, well-built, airy, well-lighted edifice of the kind in Washington, in a commanding position, has been opened for the "high school" and a "normal school," and ample means, all earned by this young New York farmer's daughter, are evermore to be devoted to secure for the colored youth of both sexes, in the District of Columbia, a culture and training equal to any offered to the white children of the most favored free State. If Myrtilla Miner's spirit was permitted to be present at the opening festival of her "normal school," she must have felt herself blessed beyond her highest hope by such a marvelous triumph. . . . After music most sweetly and touchingly rendered, a most affecting prayer, and Professor Langston's opening speech, I was called on, and addressed the intently listening audience for an hour, arousing them at last to the highest enthusiasm. Rarely has it been granted to me to pour out my mature convictions in a more concentrated focus of luminous and ardent utterance. . . . Douglass followed me in one of his most characteristic speeches, in which he spoke of me and the address with a depth of emotion that he could scarcely command. As he sat down by my side, he said with trembling voice: "That this scene should actually happen in Washington; that you should be free to say what you have said, and meet with such response; that I, a fugitive slave from Maryland, should be here in my present position, when we look back upon the past, seems absolutely miraculous." And he seemed bowed with awe, as well as gratitude, as he poured out his thanks. . . . If it never should be my happy fortune to return, my whole circle of experiences in our nation's capital has certainly been closed with a golden clasp,

the diamond gems of which were freedmen's grateful tears of joy and hope. Thank God!

Scenes like this made the patriot feel that what had been gained was worth all it cost in blood and agony, and when Rev. Howard Brown, minister at Brookline, told him that his sermon from the text "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," delivered before the Annual Convention of the Sunday-School Association, at Concord, Mass., was inspired by one he heard Mr. Channing preach at Springfield, the cup was full. He wanted to stay, to follow up the impression he had made, to deepen religious feelings, to create a "revival of spiritual earnestness," and to give his aid in imparting a fresh tone of enthusiasm to the political aspirations of the country. But the way did not open. He was going to England in November, when a petition was presented to the "Faculty" of Harvard College, asking for the establishment of a new professorship at the Divinity School. The request was made by the friends of Mr. Channing; the money was pledged; the wish was seconded by the Dean of the school, Dr. Stearns, and by working clergymen. The "Faculty" referred the case to the "Corporation," who, after respectful consideration, felt obliged to decline the gift. That this decision was a disappointment there can be no doubt; still it was final, and as no other position was found return was necessary. He sailed in the *City of Berlin* on November 24th. This was the disastrous voyage.

But the aroma lingered, and when, in 1880, he was invited to lay the corner-stone of the new church in Newport, — the "Channing Memorial Church," — he welcomed the call, intending at the same time to revisit the old scenes and the old friends, and to throw

his force into as many souls as he could reach. This was an excessively busy summer, full of excitement and toil. It was very hot. He traveled incessantly. He met all claims with eagerness, "pouring out his whole soul" on every occasion. This summer his theme was W. E. Channing. He made it his duty to present the name of his uncle, as the citizen, the reformer, the prophet, the saint, of America. This was the burden of his message, East and West, from first to last, in sermon and speech; endeavoring to kindle a flame of enthusiasm throughout the country, and to establish the true church of spiritual liberty.

In April he laid the corner-stone of the Channing Memorial Church in Newport, and made a speech about the principles upon which a true church should be built, — trust, love, unity, beneficence, — dwelling on his uncle's spiritual graces, on his humility, helpfulness, purity, aspiration, holiness, self-sacrifice, and affirming his entire sympathy with the cast of religious faith that he cherished. The address was quite original in its conception, fraught with symbolism, but profoundly earnest, hopeful, loving, a voice out of the heart. His reverent affection broke out in praise on that occasion.

It was a wonderful season of Divine Illumination! And if our blessed uncle was consciously present, he must have been upborne in gratitude and devout wonder at the immense range of his influence for good. The longer life endures, and the ampler my experience among men and great men, the more unique and peerless he appears. He was, ay, he is, a far grander, larger, nobler, wiser, sweeter, more heavenly person than even his foremost compeers and followers yet know! How he did reveal his real self in confidence to me! It is like breathing the air of

Paradise even now. His face shone with the glory of the eternal day.

In mid-summer he was at Brattleboro. In August, by invitation of the Young Men's Garfield Club, he delivered there an oration which was very remarkable for brilliancy and fullness of argument. He had not expected to be the sole speaker, and consequently had not prepared himself for the principal effort. He learned the truth at the last moment, — or it did not dawn on him till the day before, when the placards were read. But when he saw the flags flying, and heard the music, and looked into the faces of the crowd, inspiration came to him. His familiarity with history, his love of freedom, his faith in the future, rushed to his aid, and he uttered an address which astonished everybody. One who heard it tells me that its effect was electrifying. It was one of those sudden efforts of nervous power which were frequent in his life. The unexpectedness that would paralyze an ordinary mind awoke his to activity and summoned forth his powers of memory and imagination, bringing to remembrance things apparently forgotten. His voice, presence, manner, no doubt added to the impression. These can never be reproduced. Souls cannot be reported.

Mr. Channing's respect for Charles Sumner was unbounded. In 1860, after the Senator's speech on "The Barbarism of Slavery," he wrote to a friend: —

I cannot close this hasty scrawl without exchanging congratulations with you and all fellow-freemen on the delivery of Charles Sumner's speech. It is a magnificent outshine after his disastrous eclipse. The morning mail brought it with your letter, and I have barely glanced at it. All

things considered, time, place, occasion, man, and hearers, it was a grandly heroic effort. Thank God for sparing that energetic brain for such a gigantic effort, even if the speaker goes to his grave to-morrow. If you see Sumner, shake him by both hands, and thank him from heart and soul for me, as one of his many countrymen who feels a personal debt of gratitude for this brave act of fidelity to freedom.

It was natural that a man of such acute sensibilities should be annoyed by Mr. Sumner's thick envelope of personal consciousness, but all sense of annoyance disappeared in presence of such unswerving loyalty to humanity. When Mr. Sumner died, in 1874, there was nothing but praise; every letter contained heartiest tribute. The papers were eagerly scanned for eulogiums. The notices were read, items of intelligence were solicited. "God bless him! We shall not see the like of him again." Sumner's disinterestedness, courage, constancy to a moral purpose, singleness of heart, were warmly commended, and without the least abatement of eulogy. When first he heard the news there seemed so much to say that he could say nothing.

President Garfield was one of his fervent admirations. At the great meeting held at Exeter Hall on the receipt of the tidings of his death, he made a speech which to English and to some American ears must have seemed extravagant even then, but which he declared to be "natural" and "spontaneous," an outpouring of his genuine feelings. It was printed in the "*Christian Register*" for October 20, 1881. He said in a letter:—

His picture still shines down upon me with Washington and "Uncle Abe," with Michael Angelo and the infant

Samuel. Forever he whispers, "Nearer to God." There was his inner secret shrine, his fount of life, his throne of power. A letter came from Mrs. Garfield, thanking me most simply and warmly for my letters and my brief address, and in this she speaks in a word or two of the "life" which she will aid and guide in preparing. What a book that will be! how inspiring, elevating, and enlarging!

Let who will think me exaggerating in my estimate, but it is clear as noontide to me that he was our Ideal President! Read my various testimonies to his rare magnanimity, loftiness, largeness, and pure patriotism to whom you will; send them to Mrs. Garfield, with all my heart; print them broadcast, if you like. My desire is to record my loving admiration of this typical Republican for the ages. Our statesmen do not even yet know what he was, and would have become. . . . May his memory be like a sunrise of a better day for the Republic!

His activity in the summer of 1880 did not appear at the moment to exhaust him. He was well, in spite of the heat and the traveling, in excellent spirits, merry and even jocose. He spoke of himself as an "old boy," and answered all remonstrances by starting off in another direction. He did not increase in flesh: that was never his habit; weight of matter did not keep him down, give him the repose of animal content, or surround him with sensuous comfort. He lived on his nervous force. He was a most unrestful, eager person, of inordinate will power, overflowing with emotion, extraordinarily keen in his affections, conscience, intellect; with a genuine hunger and thirst for knowledge and love, a flaming ardor of soul, a craving after sympathy, divine and human. The energy of his higher nature triumphed completely over the demands of his lower, so that it was often impossible to tell how fatigued or ill he was, how

much he needed quiet. To see his friends, to amuse their children, to visit the old places, to renew old associations, was enough for him, and in these the summer of 1880 was exceedingly rich. Its weeks brought uninterrupted delight. The round of labors was a succession of joys. It is surprising that so sharp a sword did not sooner eat its way through the scabbard. This incessant expenditure of life wears out an old man. It was charming. A letter from London, written in 1881, just one year from his visit to America in 1880, tells of his satisfaction in it.

A majestic vision had crossed the ocean with me, heralding my way, and summoning me "westward" with a benignant gesture of command.

Most gratefully let me record that its every promise was redeemed, each prophecy fulfilled, and my mission to my beloved native land last year will always remain in memory as the happiest, hopefullest, heavenliest experience in my earthly career, thus far, — an infinitely happier one than any fellow-mortal could possibly apprehend.

Still it was exhausting, and all the more because it was so entrancing. He had his anxieties and sorrows, too, draining his spiritual vitality. His sister Lucy died in February, 1877; his other sister in May. In 1879 his son was severely hurt by a fall from his horse, and that winter Mr. and Mrs. Arnold were wrecked on the Nile, while traveling in Egypt, and had a narrow escape. No faith renders such things harmless to the frame, especially when one is as sensitive as he was. Our friends may "spring to heaven," yet they leave us alone; they may be "newly born," but we are desolate; the invisible family gets larger, but it is invisible, and we waste away. The callous

only are unworn. There were spiritual disappointments, too, which faith only could vanquish.

The result of my six months' missionary experiences, of my preachings far and wide, of attendance at conference meetings, and especially my observations in our last great National Conference at Saratoga, have brought me rather sadly to the conclusion that enthusiastic and cordial as has been my reception everywhere, without exception, still the season is not ripe for my gospel. Here, there, everywhere, the few have received my word gladly into thirsting soil, but the many do not in the least comprehend the import of my earnest appeals. . . . With all my marvelously sustained success, before the Heart-Searcher and Overruler, it seems to me as if my radiant hope of a new sublime "Revival of Real Religion," and a new Reorganization and Reinspiration of the Church of the Children of God, must be indefinitely postponed. . . . The glowing, nation-wide, world-wide acknowledgment of the "Better Day for Reconciled Humanity," which was my Vision like an Angel-Form beckoning me westward, while crossing the Atlantic, has ascended to the heavens, in a golden cloud. "Not yet" is the gentle inward whisper. Wait. "The God of Hope is the God of Patience." Amen.

We hear little of his preaching after his return from the Newport celebration, in 1880. But that he was fully occupied these extracts from a letter written in 1882 sufficiently evince : —

Week after week it has been my intention to write again, but incessant engagements and ever-multiplying correspondence of all kinds have prevented. Indeed, life has one more puzzle in store, in the discovery that age, so far from giving one freedom and rest, only multiplies the countless claims on one's sympathies, thoughts, means of practical help and counsel.

In fact, it has come to this, at last, that my only free

hours are before breakfast and after the family circle breaks up for the night. Each new day brings its new demands, all interesting and instructive, but combining to exhaust one's energies, alike spiritual and physical, by the efflux of life and love they call for. As for example, Ash Wednesday came the touching service and pathetic sermon of our vicar, Canon Glynn, in the morning; then the committee meetings of the Anti-Vivisection Society, with Lord Shaftesbury in the chair, and Miss Frances Power Cobbe's report and resolutions; the Social Purity Alliance, with my friend William Shaen in the chair; the Anti-Aggressive League, with Herbert Spencer, etc., as speakers. Then home to tea at six, and the evening given to reading Dean Plumptre's translation of the "Trilogy" of Æschylus to Blanche, for the lecture on Greek literature. So it comes to pass that this veteran bookworm finds that if he is to keep up his own reading he cannot seek his pillow till midnight. Fortunately he is exceedingly strong, well, and fresh, this wonderfully mild winter. . . . (Visitor.) The visitor who so relentlessly cut short my letter was the leader of the "Christian Theosophists" in London, who held me in talk about the mystics of all ages, from Buddha to Jacob Boehme, etc., till after post hours. It was most interesting. He wishes me to join their Society, as he finds me more familiar with his cherished seers, etc., than any person he has met with.

But one year later he writes to the same correspondent, in a less vigorous strain:—

Your conjecture that my long silence has been owing to indisposition is quite correct. For since my Christmas and New Year's cards and letters [he always sent them, being a constant rememberer] were dispatched, my health has been so prostrated that even to write a brief note seemed too heavy a burden. But at length Frank and his mother have induced me to take the advice of Dr. Andrew Clarke, who has done so wisely for the restoration of Lord Sel-

borne's and Mr. Gladstone's energies, and his counsel is proving as serviceable for a humble minister as for the Lord Chancellor and the Premier, and as soon as a change of weather from this terribly inclement March permits me to be freely out, and exercising in the open air, I hope to be lively and alert again.

Alas! the hope was short-lived. He was never to be "lively and alert again." His old friends were dropping off. On the same day, March 24, 1883, he wrote:—

How many, very many, of my dearest friends have been "born anew" since my last home visit; and now to that bright band of companions in the "World of Light" is added your mother and aunt's compeer from girlhood, Mrs. Eliza White Dwight, whose loveliness, so brilliant in youth, was but veiled by an atmosphere of heavenly sweetness in age. It is delightful to think of her as reawakened with more than her pristine buoyancy of intellect and spirit and exuberant affection and enthusiasm amid the large family group and assembly of friends who welcomed her to the "Heavenly Home."

Do you remember my journey with her from Washington in company with General Wadsworth and his wife, just after her eldest son had been badly wounded, and when her darling Wilder was a prisoner, and how she said to me with smiling lips, though the tears streamed down her cheeks, "I have five sons, God bless them, but He knows how gladly I would give them all for our nation!" Ah, what glad and glorious festivals we shall all share together when we meet again in the "Father's House!"

Age came upon him gently, and was very sweet. On the fiftieth anniversary of his graduation his youngest daughter sent some verses on "Youth and Age" to his assembled classmates, with her father's greeting. These two stanzas were especially marked by him:—

“ They say so, but I unconvinced remain ;
For me the beauty of the world expands,
And I survey, with less surprise than pain,
The lower level where my childhood stands.

“ And now they call me old I see before
New vistas ever opening in the light
Of new desires, and, filled with reverend awe,
I walk amid fresh pastures of delight.”

And so it was : the fields of thought opened wider and wider before him, and he wandered there and sang, all the while that his bodily strength decreased. In fact, he would have been a helpless invalid soon after his return from America in the autumn of 1880, had it not been for the singular elasticity of his mind and the unceasing buoyancy of his spirit. The glow of the soul fairly overcame the weakness of the frame. He preached several times, once at Liverpool, in the winter of 1881-1882, and was constant in his attendance on conventions and meetings, proving his heartfelt interest in all that ministered to the well-being of his fellow-creatures, and in every enterprise of kindness and generosity. At times he seemed in full vigor, throwing off special attacks, and rallying with surprising power from severe, nearly fatal assaults of congestion in the lungs. This was in the winter of 1883-1884. In the spring of the latter year, a sharp sickness from pericarditis, brought on by cold and accompanied by sharp pain, almost carried him away. Every exertion, physical or mental, reduced his small remaining strength, and in the spring of 1884 he was able to get out occasionally only, for a short drive, spending most of his day in an easy-chair, propped up by cushions, with his books about him. During the summer, when well enough, he worked, with an amanuensis, on his autobiography, copying extracts from

letters, overhauling old memories, or drawing from his stores of fancy. In these months all his patience, sweetness, affectionateness, came out. He wrote touchingly beautiful letters to his relatives and friends. He took the deepest interest in a memoir of his little grandchild, scrutinizing lovingly the engravings, illustrations, and initial letters. One of his notes concluded in these words: "Let the book be characteristic, such as her own sweet spirit will enjoy as she reads over your shoulder." A miniature of his darling called tears to his eyes, and made his face glow with emotion.

The visits of his friends gratified him exceedingly. He sent tender words of consolation to the bereaved, bidding them hope and trust. His sympathies were of the widest, touching the Roman Catholics on one side — Cardinal Manning came to see him in his sickness, brought by Father Lockhart, a disciple of Rosmini, a connection of Scott's son-in-law, a Roman Catholic priest, who took a liking to Mr. Channing and visited him three times — and the Unitarians on the other, Dr. James Martineau, just before Mr. Channing's death, receiving a kiss as he bade farewell. He was anxious to see the exhibition of sanitary appliances, the "health exhibition," at South Kensington, in August. His son, amazed at his persistence, tried in vain to dissuade him, but finally yielded, procured an easy Bath-chair, and went with him wherever the chair could go, which was through nearly all the passages. At first the interest buoyed him up, and he looked from his chair eagerly into the ambulances and other inventions for the comfort of the wounded, renewing his old memories. Then he went through the long galleries, and the street repre-

senting "Old London." His face was very pale, and he looked much too ill to be in such a place ; he had a sort of angelic, far-off expression, as if already belonging to the other world. A woman, a strong, hearty creature of the middle class, gazed at him for a moment, and with a sudden outburst of feeling, almost breaking into tears, begged him to give her a rose that he held in his hand ; then saying " God bless you ; " turned away. At this time he could read with pleasure books of philosophy, theology, history. He enjoyed Scott's novels, so healthy and refreshing.

In October there was a growing feebleness. He strove hard to get up and down stairs, so as to keep his little bedroom, with its bright outlook to the east, catching from its window the first faint rays of the dawn. Opposite the foot of his bed hung the familiar engraving of the boy Samuel, kneeling and crying, " Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." On the desk near him were his favorite books of devotion and the collections of hymns he loved, all marked with signs expressive of religious contemplation and devotional feeling. In the olden days these were accompanied by soaring philosophers, Fichte and others, who had a claim on his morning hours, and on his brightest thoughts of adoration and praise. But it soon became impossible for him to occupy the room up-stairs, and a chamber was prepared below, where he might reach the front parlor to enjoy the sense of freedom and the glad light he was so fond of. Exhausting attacks of shortness of breath, with occasional hemorrhages, complicated the wasting feebleness. At this time, and for nearly two months afterwards, he talked freely with his family, and had long conversations with visitors, on religious questions. Books

were read to him, passages from sermons, stories of heroic self-sacrifice. His nights were restless; he longed for the morning; and with the first glimmer of day he wanted the curtains drawn, that he might feel the sense of liberty and largeness, and see the heavens open. The hymns that spoke of hope and immortality were read over and over. There was a noble beauty and dignity in his manner, a sweet radiance in his smile, an earnest gentleness in his speech, a pleading searchingness in his glance.

On the closing Sunday, he listened to a portion of the communion service, and to some pages from Dr. Martineau's sermon on "The Sufferings of Messiah," and to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. On Monday, December 22d, he was nearly speechless, and could with difficulty indicate his desire to hear his favorite chapter, the eighth of Romans. Then he counted seventeen on his fingers, meaning the seventeenth chapter of John, which was read to him. He remembered his Christmas cards, heard from his wife's lips a part of the first chapter of John's Gospel, and murmured "Amen" to the Lord's Prayer repeated by his son. At a little before two o'clock, the next morning, he suddenly raised himself in bed, complained of pain in his side, and said to his faithful nurse, "I am so tired. I am dying." Still he lingered for twelve hours, conscious of his family's presence; turning lovingly towards them; attending devoutly to one or two prayers from his dear "companions;" bowing in gratitude as his daughters sang, "Nearer, my God, to Thee," "Lead, kindly Light;" responding eagerly to his wife's tender mention of his departed children, Mary and "Liza;" smiling with ineffable affection on a photograph of "Bettie," his darling grand-

child ; sending gentle messages to friends who greeted him ; gazing fondly on the picture of Emerson, in Dr. Holmes's " Life," brought in an hour before the last breath was drawn ; cherished with beaming pleasure the thought of his Christmas cards welcomed by the friends in America ; and passed peacefully away, like a child going to sleep.

In his case death had no bitterness. It was rather an exhalation than a dissolution. Immortality was not a tradition with him ; it was a personal assurance. He lived in the glory of its promise, as plants live in air. His private habits, his rules of conduct, his morning meditations, his humane services, his nightly studies, were all founded on the conviction that he was never to die. He dealt with men as a soul among souls. He was always aspiring and teaching others to aspire. In this he was peculiar, that as the sunshine sleeps in the sods, so heaven melted into his earth. He did not cease ; he went on, and he always thought of himself as going on. Good by, dear, seraphic friend. " Vale in melius." To thee desire and duty were one. Self-sacrifice was indeed the all-sufficient joy.

" To thee death was not
So much even as the lifting of a latch ;
Only a step into the open air,
Out of a tent already luminous
With light that shines through its transparent walls !
O pure in heart ! From thy sweet dust shall grow
Lilies, upon whose petals will be written
' Ave Maria ' in characters of gold ! "

Tender words were said over the cast-off body, on Saturday of Christmas week, by Dr. Sadler, at the chapel in Little Portland Street, in the presence of Dr. Martineau, Professors Drummond and J. E. Car-

penter, Rev. Mr. Ierson, Rev. Mr. Solly, Rev. Mr. Lazenby, Mr. William Shaen, and a number of ladies, the small attendance, due to the privacy of the announcement, rendering the services more impressive, the spirit of real respect, veneration, and love giving emphasis to every word of prayer, every line of Scripture, every sentence of tribute.

The body was brought to Boston, the city of his birth, and there were services, on January 24th, at the Unitarian Church on Arlington Street, the successor of the meeting-house on Federal Street, where Dr. Channing preached. The choicest minds were present. Flowers were sent by loving friends. Palms told of victory. The perfume of violets filled the place. White flowers gave to the coffin the grace of purity. Edward Everett Hale read chosen verses from the eighth chapter of Romans. Rev. Mr. Briggs prayed. Samuel May and James Freeman Clarke spoke gentle, trusting, generous, but just and sober words of praise, showing their feeling by what they could not say. The choir sung selections from Bach's *Passion Music*, together with his grand chorale, "Was Gott thut, das ist wohlgethan," "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and "Lead, kindly Light." But the services, though impressive and sweet, were inadequate. The heroic life had an aroma about it that could not be caught. Neither prayer nor music was fine enough to convey it.

"The silent organ loudest chants
The master's requiem."

Said one relative to another, as they met in the porch, "We have come to pay the last mortal honors to one who had no mortality about him."

XVI.

THE PREACHER.

WILLIAM HENRY CHANNING was a preacher by temperament, predisposition of birth, training, reverence for his uncle, inbred influences of home. Even at the time of professional despondency, when he thought of other means of influence, other ways of earning a livelihood, lecturing, writing, teaching, he said that he was a preacher by calling. He was an idealist, and the preacher must be an idealist, as the idealist is apt to preach, if not in a pulpit, on a platform, or in a book, or through an essay. Then, too, he was interested in theological speculation, in philosophy and general history, in social reform, in questions of ethics, in the formation of character, in the power of spiritual agencies to transform mankind. But as a preacher his office was peculiar. He was a prophet, an inspirer, an awakener of souls; not the minister of a sect, the servant of an institution, or the representative of a stated morality. He could not be a party man, the obedient member of an established church, the advocate of any local, exclusive creed. The broadest communion was not broad enough for him. Even the Church of England, wide as it was, liberal as, in some aspects, it had become, much as he admired and loved it, dearly as he cherished men and women in it, was a national

church, after all, and must yield to a wider revelation of truth. His intense spirituality was satisfied with nothing less than a universal religion; a craving which, of itself, proves that he could not have been anything else than a divine. In 1871, he wrote to the secretary of the Free Religious Association: —

To all intents and purposes it is decided that the Established Church of England and Scotland must follow in its downfall that of Ireland. The age of uniformity will give place to that of unity in variety, and in room of the composite, artificial structure of the Tudors will appear the grand National Church of the United Kingdom. As the former melts away, — beautiful as it was in its season, like the winter's frost-temple, — will appear upgrowing the stately forest, green with spring, amidst whose boughs shall breathe the spirit of the living God. This nation was never so really religious as now, so longing to be religious in very truth and deed. . . . The "Young England" of to-day is growing earnest; presently it will become heroic. And the prediction made in my former letter is confidently repeated: "The end of this growing agitation will be a pure, fervent, free, and energetic theism, full of reverence and devotion, rich in deeds of loving patriotism and humanity, a real reformation in spirit and in life.

Such a man, so hopeful, enthusiastic, strong of faith in abstract principles, ardent in expectation of superhuman guidance, sure of the providential ruling of events, was ordained to be a prophet. He had the gifts of the speaker, a musical voice, a radiant, expressive countenance, a beaming presence, a wonderful fluency of utterance, a suggestive diction, a picturesque delivery, an extraordinary command of images, a singular readiness in extemporaneous oratory; strictly extemporaneous, for he was able to present the same argument in different words, so that

it was in everything but the bare outline of thought a new discourse. He never hesitated or repeated a phrase, and had none of the air of one who was thinking of his language, instead of being borne along by the torrent of his message. His sermon was a fresh effusion every time. Of course, the main drift of purpose and tendency was premeditated. He knew what he meant to do. But he could think on his feet and adapt himself to his audience as he went on. There are few who can do that, most so-called "extemporaneous" speaking being nothing more than the repetition of a discourse without written manuscript. His chosen form of address was extemporaneous, because it was free, versatile, spontaneous. Here are reports of his sermons, piles of them, going far back to Troy, Rochester, Washington. They are eloquent, full of thought and learning, abundant in suggestion, burning with earnestness. I selected one or two as samples of his work, but am not justified in publishing any: partly for the reason that the immediate glow on which their effect so much depended is wanting; partly because they were not corrected for the press, according to his intention; and partly because the taste for food so ethereal has passed away. That which is addressed to the imagination, as his sermons were, can best be left to the imagination. He put his life into them; they were, in his eyes, very important; he was minded to print them; volumes are marked for revision, but they remain for the most part in fragments. One or two discourses were written out for publication, notably "The Gospel of To-Day," preached at the ordination of his cousin, T. W. Higginson, in 1847. This was a favorite sermon. It gives his whole message.

Theodore Parker said: "Yes! Channing hit the same nail every time; he hit it hard; but the head was downward; he never drove the iron in." It was a witty saying, but was it just? Channing's object was not to fasten men down to principles, but to lift them up by means of principles. The simile of a nail beneath a hammer does not describe his process. The figure of a kite, fastened by a cord to human heart-strings and drawing men upwards towards the empyrean, would better befit him. Nor is it quite fair to say that, instead of beginning with solid facts, coördinating the facts, ascertaining the law that governs them, tracing their moral significance, and, finally, announcing their spiritual bearing, he began at the top, dwelt on the abstract spiritual principle, then came gradually down, and at last, when the hearers were tired, made the practical application; thus reversing the effective order, leaving men virtually in the clouds, and making the feeblest possible connection with actual life. For in the first place, every true preacher begins by letting his ultimate truth be seen, however he may choose to unfold it; and, in the next place, Mr. Channing deemed his duty discharged when he had made his general principle clear, and spent all his force in bringing that out. He did not come down to the earth at all, did not aim to, but stayed aloft. He tried to render the upper air palpable to human souls. He himself was capable of performing the humblest offices of charity, and he had the most vivid apprehension of the relation to the moment of the most sublime ideas. But, in his exposition, the link was logical rather than practical, and the lack of blood in his treatment of earthly details was sometimes too evident. His function was

not that of Parker. His mission was not to thunder and lighten and break things down to the ground, but to let his dew and sunshine fall upon withered hearts. He was an invigorator, a consoler, an uplifter. He was a nourisher of aspiration ; not so much an instructor as a healer, an apostle of light and love. Apparently he could not kindle a flame where no embers existed, but where the feeblest appetite for spiritual things was alive in the bosom he was able to create a veritable hunger and thirst after righteousness. In this he was eminently successful, both at home and abroad. Few clergymen received more frequent or warm testimonies of personal influence. Here are some of them, taken incidentally from notes : —

To-day is our Hospital Sunday ; and the chapel was fuller than I have ever seen it. Our morning collection exceeded by nearly £10 the whole collection of last year ; and this evening will increase it considerably, we hope. So my usual good fortune in preaching “ charity sermons ” has accompanied my appeals to-day.

Here is a word from one he did good to, in Leeds : —

Help to confirm in peace the hearts you have so much strengthened. Though I should write for a week, I should only clumsily express what a debt I owe to you. When one has prayed for years and years that a light in one’s life may find flame, how sacred seems the torch which has been the means of kindling it ! You will, if you have to quit us, at any rate leave behind one spiritual son to link your thought with the ages.

At Renshaw Street, Liverpool, in 1881, when he last preached there, two Methodist ministers came to him in the vestry, at the close of the services, reached out their hands, and said, with beaming faces : —

Pardon our intrusion; for, though personally unacquainted, we felt that it would be wrong to go away without expressing our grateful response to the truth you have declared to-night. Would that we could hear such preaching as that in our pulpits!

In Leeds, a blind Jewish gentleman was at church, with his wife and sister. He could hardly contain himself, kept pressing his companion's hand, and when the meeting was over exclaimed: "Well! That is the star of preachers." The lady who told this, with her husband, experienced a new birth under his preaching, and had another world opened at his coming.

A saintly invalid said to him on her bed of pain, one day: "I have often wished to tell you how much I was comforted and strengthened many years ago, on your visit to Dublin, by a sermon you preached on the love of our Heavenly Father for every one, even the least of his children. It helped me much." This was at Leeds, in 1876. Similar testimony comes from Rochester, Washington, Cincinnati, in fact from every place where he ministered. "These are just the sermons we need," it was often said. "They encourage and animate us to lead more heavenly lives."

His discourses were chiefly on themes connected with spiritual religion, the divine love, charity, unity, brotherhood, character, the soul's longings and capacities, duty, communion, joy, faith, hope; and whatever else he spoke of was turned in this direction. His preaching was as varied as that of most men, and so great were his mental resources, so keen was his spiritual interest, that there was never a sense of monotony. Of course there were people who did not understand him, called him mystical, visionary,

transcendental; but there were also many to whom his sermons were the very bread of life, and these were the soaring natures. Many spoke their gratitude to him, some wrote it, but only one of his letters of reply remains. It was addressed, in 1880, to a young woman in Woburn, Mass., who had been helped by a sermon, and confessed in touching language her debt. His letter is very humble and thankful, full of encouragement and counsel, the speech of a spiritual father to his child. Delicacy alone forbids its being printed.

One thing added vastly to his power: the absolute consistency that existed between his word and his deed, his public teaching and his private conduct. He was heavenly minded throughout, without guile or suspicion of worldliness. Nor was his a passive goodness. He was exceedingly active. In the largest city of the modern world, amid numerous inducements to a merely social, literary, or scholastic existence, amid many discouragements to calmness or serenity of mind, his ear, eye, hand, were ever open, his sympathies were always fresh, his energies in beneficence were unstinted. He never faltered or despaired. No baseness took his heart out. He was daunted by no depravity. He was soiled by no uncleanness. His very atmosphere was refreshing. People were happy to believe as he believed, to feel as he felt. "Don't you see the angels?" he seemed to say. And we said we did, even if we did not, because he did. This man's preaching was simply an emanation from himself, a projection of his own personality. No wonder it prevailed.

He went from place to place, from town to town, from parish to parish: not because a large number

did not want him to stay, for they did ; not because he had preached himself out, for he had not ; but in part from dissatisfaction with the native work of the profession, which is to a great degree mechanical, and chiefly because the prophetic spirit drove him into new places. He had a gospel to carry ; and when he had proclaimed it to one set of hearers he wanted another. He was an apostle, and must keep traveling. Neither money nor fame tempted him. He was a disciple of the truth, and his errand was to spread the truth which he felt was intrusted to him as widely as possible. Not many preachers have that calling ; but those who have should not suffer under the imputation of being itinerants. The skies are not local ; neither can they who bear torches stand still. He was always a champion of mental liberty, and was for giving it broader meanings. A friend sent him Heber Newton's "*Studies of the Life of Jesus*," and told him about the preacher's interest in plans of coöperative industry. He hailed the new prophet. "Why," he exclaimed, "did you not tell me before of such a light? I would go on foot to New York to see him." His face was thus set towards the dawn. He was ever in pursuit of the "bow of promise," which flies before the swiftest feet.

He was never a polemic or controversialist ; never belonged to the church militant. He was a preacher of reconciliation and theological peace. His interest was in religious qualities, and his aim their production. He has been called a mystic ; and so he was in a way, so he would gladly be named. So in a general sense were George Fox and Emerson, and even Theodore Parker. So were Kant and Schelling and

Fichte. So were Channing and Martineau. So were the Wesleyans and Moravians. That is to say, he believed in intuition, warmed by contemplation, and made solid by experience; in the power to see God with the spiritual eye; in interior vision; in the soul; in the yearnings of the heart; in the hidden or celestial meaning of sacred writings; in some doctrine of correspondence between things above and things below. He believed in the indwelling God; in the living Christ, who was truly born in the heart's experience; in the non-existence of evil as an absolute entity; in the freedom of the emancipated will, that lives and moves and has its being in God; in spiritual and therefore endless existence. But he was no dreamer or spiritual voluptuary. He borrowed the intellectual side of his creed from the modern, even the industrial age. He appealed to philosophy, to science, to criticism. He cultivated the society of broad-minded men and women. He was a man of the day and the hour; at home in London; an admirer of Robert Browning and Herbert Spencer. An obscure, incomprehensible man he certainly was not, except in so far as the ardently aspiring must always be cloudy to the lover of sharp definitions and dialectical processes. In his later life, under the influence of the heart, his mysticism assumed a more sentimental character, as is proved by a few rather extravagant hymns to Jesus; but these should not prejudice us against the mysticism itself, which any believer in intuition may easily fall into.

About 1872, after reading Francis de Sales, his devout feelings, always eager, deepened sensibly, and a critical eye might trace out logical inferences in

the direction of trinitarianism, but there is the best assurance that his intellectual frame-work of doctrine remained unchanged. He never worshiped any but the Supreme, nor did he ascribe general creative influences to an inferior being.

He preached better the older he grew, and ceased only when his physical strength declined. His intellectual strength never diminished. When he could no longer speak in public, he could exert power by patience and sweetness and peace.

He was unusually successful in attracting children by his preaching. His earnestness, directness, simplicity, picturesqueness reached their hearts. "Never shall I forget," writes one, "the impression made on my mind and heart when hearing Mr. Channing for the first time. . . . His charm, his simplicity and power, when addressing children, was unsurpassed, and that because he spoke directly from the heart to the heart." I once heard him talk to boys at Eagleswood, New Jersey, and shall never forget his persuasive, convincing words. They made me wish that I had another chance.

These lines, written by the poet Robert Leighton, and published in "Records and other Poems," describe justly the whole effect of his preaching:—

"Farewell, my Channing! I will call thee mine,
For love gives full possession. Two rich years,
Obscurely and unknown to thee, I've lived
Upon thy wealth of thought, and through each week
Have hunger'd for thy Sabbath feast.
But thou art gone, as if the hand of death
Had on the instant beckoned thee away.
E'en through that sermon, which became our last,
A hope possessed me almost to the end;
But when the closing word fell from thy lips

Methought the door of heaven slamm'd in my face,
And left me outside weeping, thou within —
That beauteous temple of thy ministry.
Its heavenward pillars and its pictured light
Breathed inwardly the very soul of art.
It was a living beauty — it is now
Only a splendid tomb, fill'd with regrets.

“ And who of all thy creed — if creed be thine,
Whose universal heart has room for all —
Shall fitly fill thy place? Many will come;
And flowing essays, brimm'd with noble thoughts,
And very like to sermons, we shall have,
But who shall be the preacher? They will come;
And when they've pass'd the ordeal we shall find
New laurels round thy name, and in our hearts
A deeper pang of grief. And adverse minds
That held thee as a dreamer, misty, vague,
Will, from the mere transparency that follows,
Grow doubly clear, and learn to read thy dreams.

“ Thy theme, however low,
Soon beat the heavenly chords; for God, the sum
Of all true preaching, was thy all in all.
If thou didst ever harp upon that chord,
'T was glorious sameness, and, like blessed bread,
Came with a daily sweetness. Thou wouldst stand
Possessed in thought, thy utterance half choked;
And we could almost fear thy burdened thought
Was not for us, when lo! it came, like some
Rock-barriered spring, in unexpected ways;
No measured strain, of which, the first part given
And we might end the sentence; it was more
An inspiration through thee, thou thyself
As much surprised as we. For thou wert still
The worshiper, and not alone the priest.

“ Thy every Sabbath gave us some new heart —
The after week was upward. Thou art gone!
And in the stand-still of my grief, I feel
The ground already slipping. On the heights
To keep our footing is to climb and climb.
We cease to climb, the shingly slopes give way,
And we are passing downward. Thou art gone!

And in our clouded ken there 's no one left
To tell us of the light beyond the clouds.
Farewell ! Could we not bravely lose thee now
It would belie thy teachings ! this our faith —
That God's true servants serve most by their loss,
The Christ that preach'd the Sermon on the Mount
Began his ministry upon the Cross."

XVII.

THE MAN OF LETTERS.

MR. CHANNING had a strong literary bent. Not only was he acquainted with all that was passing in the world of thought, but he possessed a fine instinct for form and finish of style; he was an excellent judge of prose and verse. His letters — even his short notes had a distinguished air — were very far from being ill-proportioned or slovenly. He chose his words, balanced his sentences, elaborated descriptions, “made points.” In early life some of his friends anticipated for him a literary career. He himself, after his service in New York as minister at large, seems to have meditated such a course in Boston. Again in 1852, after his ministry in Boston as an Associationist, he appears to have thought of writing, lecturing, editing, doubting his reception among the Unitarian clergy. But this was temporary; his real genius was for preaching, and he knew it. Nor is there any solid ground for thinking that he ever had a serious purpose to do anything else. As a boy, he amused himself by writing lines, on bits of paper covered with extraordinary drawings, some showing a good deal of talent, of faces and horses. In fact, one fancies sometimes that the artistic gift was large in him. There is a small package of verses, written in college, on which he passes a severe judgment. “They are

certainly poor enough." Yet they show considerable faculty for metrical expression. Of course he tried his hand on the "Erl-King" and "Mignon's Song." Here is a pretty fair translation of Körner's "Battle-Prayer." It was reproduced from memory, in 1884, and was often sung by our soldiers during the war for the Union.

"Father, I call to Thee!
Roaring, clouds o'er me the thick smoke of battle,
The forked lightnings flash, the fatal bolts rattle.
Ruler of armies, I call upon Thee!
Father, oh, succor me!

"Father, oh, succor me!
Lead me to victory — lead me to death,
Thy power, O Creator, I feel in each breath.
Lead me, O Lord, as it best pleaseth Thee.
God, I acknowledge Thee!

"God, I acknowledge Thee!
As I see in the leaf-strewing tempest thy form,
So, where man is laid low in the battle's fierce storm,
Fountain of mercies, thy presence I see.
Kind Father, favor me!

"Kind Father, favor me!
My life to thy care I commit, God of heaven;
Take back, if it please Thee, the life Thou hast given;
Living or dying, still favor me.
Father, praise be to Thee!

"Father, praise be to Thee!
Not for fame, or for wealth, or for power we fight,
The sword has been bared for defense of the right.
Then conquering or falling, praise be to thee.
God, I submit to Thee!

"God, I submit to Thee!
When the thunderbolt bears me the summons of death,
When my life blood is gushing, when heaves my last breath,
This being, my God, I yield up to Thee.
Father, I call on Thee!"

These stanzas are not unmusical : —

“ From the valley’s gloomy hollow
Where the chilling vapors rest,
Was there but a path to follow
Oh, how glad I were and blest !
Yonder swell the hills in brightness,
Green with ever-youthful spring ;
Soon I ’d tread their slopes with lightness,
Could I mount on soaring wing.

“ Harmonies melodious blending
Spread around a heavenly calm,
Gentle breezes hither wending
Waft the fragrancy of balm.
Golden fruitage there is glowing,
Hidden half in leafy gloom,
Richest flowers sweetly blowing,
Dread no frosts to rob their bloom.

“ Ah, how sweet forever straying
In the sun’s unclouded light,
Purest gales around me playing
Freshness breathing from each height !
But, alas, the swollen torrent
Roars in foaming might along,
And its whirling, angry current
Soon would overwhelm the swimmer strong.

“ On the stream a bark is tossing,
But, alas, no boatman’s near.
Boldly in, then ! tempt the crossing !
Spread the sail ! away with fear !
Naught is left but faith and daring,
Heaven extends no helping hand ;
Trust in thy strong spirit’s bearing
Thee to yon bright Wonderland.”

This strain is pensive, as so many of his were : —

“ Midst all earth’s multitudes no single heart
With its deep wants, hidden unconscious joy,
Its hopes and sorrows, finds full sympathy !
Each is alone. Words like a mirror back
Reflect our living thoughts inanimate,

And take the color of the glass they reach.
 Ours is a separate universe ; the sun
 Sheds rainbow hues and golden showers on all,
 Yet with peculiar glory to each mind.
 The mellow moonlight bathes hills, fields, and floods,
 Smile the pale evening stars, clouds fleecy float,
 Grace, beauty, love, speak in each thing that stirs,
 And the commingling melodies of earth
 Strike every ear, and yet a different tale
 Whisper these thousand witnesses to all.
 Wordsworth ! my listening consciousness can catch
 No echo of that heavenly joyousness,
 No ray of that soul-beaming radiance,
 No strain of that felt melody which made
 To thy young soul this earth a paradise.
 No summer morn was infancy to me,
 With odorous incense of fresh-opening loves
 And caroling of happy thoughts new waked,
 And glad upspringing of aspiring hopes.
 Dampness and shrouding mists with moody silence
 Veiled my dawning soul."

In 1837, when all antislavery men were agitated on the subject of the annexation of Texas, Mr. Channing wrote a letter to the editor of the "New York American," ending with the following patriotic and spirited poem, entitled —

THE FREEMAN'S RALLY-CALL.

Freemen of our land, awaken !
 Drowned in worldliness, awake !
 Shall your dearest rights be taken ?
 Rouse and rally ; all 's at stake.

Slaves of Mammon, will ye slumber,
 Dreaming of your heaps of gold ?
 Tyrants rise, a countless number,
 And your freedom's knell is tolled.

Martyrs ! heirs ! ye dare not measure
 Blood-bought rights with golden gain.
 Rouse, then, rouse to guard your treasure ;
 Tyrant brothers forge your chain.

Brother forges chains for brother,
Piles the fagot, knots the scourge, —
Hearts to deaden, thoughts to smother;
Hark ! our dying Union's dirge.

Freemen ! Freemen ! hear the warning,
Rouse ye while there yet is time ;
Shall our Nation's peaceful morning
Set in anarchy and crime ?

Rouse ye, rouse, of every region,
Age and calling, sex and rank ;
Peaceful meet the tyrant legion,
Patient hear the fetters clank.

Tell them, though in shouts of thunder,
Tell them in the whispered vow,
Traitors' hands shall never sunder
Ties of love which bind us now.

Brothers, brothers, stay your madness.
Will ye drive us to the fight ?
Heaven knows we arm in sadness,
But we must defend the right.

Free we are to think and utter
Righteous thoughts in language strong ;
Threats and curses though ye mutter,
We must guard our land from wrong.

By our common debt to Heaven,
By our fathers' holy graves,
By our souls, our pledge is given,
Brothers, we will not be slaves.

This is enough ; perhaps more than enough. An apology may be needed for printing these pieces. But it seemed desirable to give an example of literary imperfections, as well as of literary excellences. And the devotion of one's muse to Liberty is altogether admirable. After the period of middle life we find no verses. The admiration was for the poetry of

others. His favorite among living poets was, as has been said, Robert Browning, whom he regarded as the foremost of the Victorian band. Browning's masterpiece was, in his estimation, "Pippa Passes," though "Luria" seized upon his imagination both by its passionate orientalism and by its lesson of sacrifice. The edition of "Sordello" of 1864 is somewhat differently pointed from that of 1840. It is said that these alterations were made in accordance with Mr. Channing's punctuation, he maintaining that the poem needed only proper punctuation to be intelligible. From this it would appear that Mr. Channing's discernment was greater than that of some eminent critics.

For the "Dial" he wrote but little, his preoccupations at that time rendering it impossible for him to contribute much even to help such friends as Margaret Fuller and R. W. Emerson. Research discloses but four articles from his pen: two chapters of "Ernest the Seeker," one in the first number, and one in the second; a short piece called "Night and Day," in the first number of the second volume; and a paper on "Wheat Seed and Bolted Flour," in the same issue. The pages on "Night and Day" are especially interesting as embodying his conception of the future man. The article is based on Michael Angelo's well-known statues in the Medici chapel at Florence, and contains an explanation of the unfinished state of the "dawn." Man was not awake yet. The chapters of "Ernest the Seeker" show why he could not be a Roman Catholic; how the love of mental freedom was cardinal with him, overruling his æsthetic taste.

The translation of Jouffroy's "Introduction to

Ethics," in the fifth and sixth volumes of George Ripley's "Specimens of Foreign Standard Literature," was published in 1841. In a brief preface the translator outlines the principles of the French school thus: I. Psychology is the basis of philosophy. II. The highest problems of Ontology may be solved by inductions from the facts which Psychology ascertains. III. Psychology and the history of philosophy reciprocally explain each other. And he makes this significant declaration: "Were the various doctrines in which men have believed accurately analyzed, we should have a complete representation of man's spirit. The creeds of men have grown out of some primary law of their minds." This might have been an expression of the ordinary eclecticism that was abroad at that period, but it contained the key to his later speculation, which started from a primary communication by God to the human soul, and accepted differences of opinion as so many interpretations of the primeval truth.

A number of articles were written for the "North American Review," the "Christian Examiner," and other periodicals, but few of much literary importance. In the "Christian Examiner" for November, 1847, is a paper on "Edwards and the Revivalists," which is very interesting, as throwing light on his opinions, while it illustrates his habit of dwelling on the sweet, bright side of what to most men were sour and dark views. In a letter written at Leeds, November 30, 1875, he says: "I could not to-day write anything as good, or more thoroughly expressing my present views." In this article he quotes the following beautiful passage from Edwards:—

The first instance that I remember of that sort of inward, sweet delight in God and divine things that I have lived much in since was on reading these words: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever." As I read, there came into my soul, and was, as it were, diffused through it, a sense of the glory of the Divine Being. . . . I thought with myself, how excellent a Being that was, and how happy I should be if I might enjoy that God, and be rapt up to Him in heaven, and be swallowed up in Him forever. I kept saying, and, as it were, singing, over these words of Scripture, and went to pray to God that I might enjoy Him; and as I was walking and looking up on the sky and clouds, there came into my mind a sweet sense of the glorious majesty and grace of God. I seemed to see them both in a sweet conjunction: majesty and meekness joined together: it was a sweet, and gentle, and holy majesty, and also a majestic meekness; an awful sweetness; a high, and great, and holy gentleness.

Passages like these abound in Jonathan Edwards' religious books, and quite justify Mr. Channing in his conclusion that "his monstrous error grew out of reverence, and it was his faith in the holiness of the Almighty which led him into even his most appalling statements."

Margaret Fuller perished in 1850, and the task of editing her memoir devolved on Mr. Channing. This many-sided woman excited the warmest interest in her friends, nor is it strange that they rendered something more than justice to her remarkable genius. Journals and letters were read; the best pens were enlisted in the work; Mr. Emerson, Mr. Clarke, Mr. Hedge, cheerfully conspired; meetings for consultation and comparison were held; and as the task unfolded admiration increased. The editor exclaims to

a friend : " I never knew or loved this glorious friend, it seems to me, till now ! Do you really know what a sublime and lovely being she was ? " The wish was to do her such justice as could be done ; to make a rich, attractive, interesting book, — a book that would exert influence on the community, besides being profitable in the market. That Mr. Channing was dissatisfied with own his part, calling it " cold gravy," is not surprising ; he was dissatisfied with all his performances ; nor would his system of editing wholly meet the critical requirements of the present day. But it was a difficult achievement to edit so composite a biography, and to express in words an unbounded enthusiasm is never easy and tempts to an occasional sin of omission. Since then, doubtless, material has been discovered which made another attempt desirable ; but a generation and more ago, such a memoir was most excellent. The literary execution, saving the intellectual heat that was natural under the circumstances, was admirable. Indeed, one can only be surprised at the restraint exercised when one reads the extracts from her letters.

How I wish that you would dismiss the past except as the birthplace of the future ! In you is an energy which is your divine, lawful heritage ; which, if you trust it, will make you wholly strong and always radiant, and a benefactor to all about you if you will let it. How shall I convince you that I do not see falsely ? It is because of this sure faith that I abide by you. Strange that I have not the power to make you trust yourself. To-night I lay on the sofa and saw how the flame shot up from beneath through the mass of coal which had been piled upon it. While beautiful jets sprang up, then quickly sank again, and all was black and unsightly, till at length the whole mass was kindled. And

thus, thought I, is it with human life at present; and yet, if the fire beneath will but persist and conquer, all the blackness shall become radiant and life-like, fit to light a domestic hearth, or for the altar. Yes, so shall it be if we trust our God with a confidence that never flags. May God show you the true course, and so harmonize your life and thought, giving you so profound an insight that no other lives can bring a jar to you.

Your influence on me, in whatever shape it comes, has always been purifying, ennobling, and of late it has been so suggestive of thoughts on the greatest themes of the time that its influence, though pensive, has been most fruitful. I have seemed to be wandering in an unexplored forest, out of which I have not yet found the way. It is a solemn shade, damp and chill, yet full of forms of quiet life, and gentle flowers around the path, while now and then a star shines through the shadows.

Forget, if you can, all petulant or overstrained tendencies which may have displeased your pure conscience, and commend me in your prayers to my best self; and when in the solitudes of the spirit comes upon you some lofty aspiration of earnest faith and high hope, then believe that the power which has guided me so faithfully emboldens my thoughts to frame a prayer for you. And so, farewell.

It was inevitable too, at that time, that stress should be laid on the "transcendental" side of Margaret Fuller's character. The "practical" side was then neither as well known nor as well appreciated. It was the habit of thinkers to talk a good deal about the "intuitions," and to dwell on the "experiences of the soul," and to assume a tragic manner when dealing with human life, nor can it be at all surprising if this habit colored somewhat the presentation of a character like Margaret's. But the selection from letters is, on the whole, made with judgment and

taste. The mottoes prefixed to the volumes show a familiarity with German and Italian literature remarkable, at that day, even among members of the transcendental school, while the brief disquisitions are invariably clear, simple, and luminous.

The success of the book was most gratifying. It was called "the best biography ever printed." Old foes confessed their injustice; critics regretted their loss in not knowing so wonderful a person; the general public were astonished at the revelations of character. The first edition was speedily exhausted. The best judges liked it most. Mr. Clarke's contribution was particularly admired. Mr. Emerson's appeared a little cold-blooded and anatomical. But the editor liked it. "For one," he said, "I am unspeakably charmed with the inimitable spirit, freshness, vigor, tact, truth, of his daguerreotype. And there are touches of tenderness, of fraternal affectionateness, reverential appreciation, compassion, confidence, which I did not look for. Altogether we may rest assured that in this book a good work has been well done. This monument will live as long as our literature." In the same strain as this last clause he writes to Mr. Emerson: "And so this blessed soul shall rest from her labors, while her works will praise her as long as English is read. For I say confidently, a more affecting, ennobling picture of life-long struggle and triumph has not been given in our tongue. I thought I loved and honored Margaret living in the body; I now see that I never knew her before. She was peerless." He evidently supposed that the memoir covered the whole ground, and set the several episodes in their just proportion. Certainly, he spared no pains to learn everything, and the efforts he made to glean information were deserving of all praise.

The *Life and Writings* of his cousin, James Handasyd Perkins, — youngest child of Samuel G. Perkins and Barbara Higginson, — was written about the same time, — 1851. Mr. Perkins' sad death occurred in 1849, and the duty of gathering up his remains fell naturally to Mr. Channing. The memoir of three hundred and twenty pages is delicate, tender, truthful, but was manifestly done under great pressure of engagements, and the amount of original matter is therefore not very large. In the first part a bright description of his own youth in connection with that of his friend is presented, — his sports and games and frolics and studies; but the character is left a good deal to the imagination, and no attempt is made to solve the mystery of his cousin's death. In fact, no successful attempt could be made, for no authoritative clue existed, and one conjecture was as good as another. Mr. Perkins must have been a very extraordinary man, a man to honor and love as well as to admire, and his story is told by one who was attached to him as to a brother, and respected him for qualities of a noble stamp. The reserve is not the least remarkable trait of the delineation.

The memoir of William Ellery Channing, the uncle, was published in 1848. Dr. Channing's death occurred in the autumn of 1842. The long time that elapsed between the beginning and the end of the work was explained by the biographer as due to the necessity of allowing a period of years to pass before speaking of one with whom he had lived in such close personal relations; to the pressure of duties "amidst religious and social movements, from which he would never have permitted me, on his account, to stand aloof;" to prolonged and repeated illness; and to efforts at remodel-

ing his own work. To these causes of delay must be added the immense amount of material to be looked over and arranged, together with the scrupulous care to paint a faithful picture of one so intensely revered. The whole plan of the biography was changed. At first a finished portrait of the man was contemplated, setting him forth, at full length, in the light of his generation ; and copious preparations were made for this. We should possess a more vivacious, brilliant, suggestive book if that scheme had been pursued, but possibly a less satisfactory, certainly a less complete, one. And so the nephew conscientiously sunk his own individuality, confining himself to a narrative of the earlier years, and to the formation of connecting links between the selections. Thus the volumes consisted mainly of autobiographical statements. Of course the author had to make the extracts, and the reader must rely on his fidelity. In this way partiality might be shown, such passages being chosen as suited the editor's purpose. But he did his utmost to avoid this, being not only aware of the danger but anxious to shun it, and studious to present those opinions only which he was sure of not misunderstanding or misinterpreting. The author carried his delicacy so far that he threw aside a sketch of the rise and progress of the "Unitarian Controversy," wherein he had traced the course of thought from the middle of the last century, taking Edwards and the Revivalists to illustrate spirituality of aim, Chauncy and the Reformers as confirming the philanthropic tendency, Mayhew and the Rationalists as introducing free inquiry, — the whole leading up to the era of pure religious life which Dr. Channing heralded. In this sketch the editor did not hesitate to avow his

own conviction that the forced separation of the "liberal Christians" was a mistake. Sectarianism was a thing to be avoided. "Even down to 1820," he says, "this band of brethren, differing in opinion, but united in spirit and in action, sometimes called themselves Catholic Christians. The name was a grand one, and if they had adopted it and been indeed governed by it there can be but little doubt that theological science would have been further advanced among us than it is now." The nephew derived his love of unity from the uncle, and what Dr. Channing's feeling was we know.

The success of the book was immediate and decided. James Walker, Convers Francis, Alvan Lamson, Judge White, welcomed it warmly. So did Mrs. Charles Sedgwick and Mrs. Follen. The family were more than satisfied. One of them, — the widow, — whose approval gave him especial delight, wrote to him : —

Your book has made me your debtor in more senses than one. I have not yet been able to read it regularly, but I have read enough to feel how truly you have appreciated his pure and holy character. You have been perfectly true and just to him ; and though some may think your affection must have blinded you, I do not, and no one can who really knew him. I am pleased that you have made him to a great degree his own biographer. . . . I wish I had the power of expressing to you how grateful I feel for the whole work. You have done something like giving him back to me again.

William Rathbone wrote cordially from Liverpool, Joanna Baillie from Hampstead, Miss Carpenter from Bristol. James Martineau requested an early sight of the volumes in order to review them in the "Prospective," and in answer to a friendly letter said : —

While anxious to be intrusted with the review, I yet shrink from the task, from the very depth of my gratitude and affection towards the labors of Dr. Channing. Little is needed in this country to secure for his name a just appreciation. . . . But the current sentiment needs to be expressed; and those who share it most strongly may be naturally expected to give it utterance.

The notices of the papers and magazines were, in the main, complimentary of the editor's achievement. The criticisms -- and they were not many -- turned on his method, which exhibited Dr. Channing's opinions, but not in their chronological order, not in the order of their formation; so that the reader had to refer back and forth for dates. The London "Spectator" thought that, considering the author's advantages, the book as a biographical narrative was rather disappointing: —

The biographer seems to have been overpowered by the expectation of his uncle's admirers and his own relationship, and to have formed an erroneous notion of biography. . . . The idea was not bad, . . . but the execution is too minute, and will seem tedious to all except disciples of Channing. Not satisfied with copious extracts from letters often sermon-like, which courtesy to their contributors may have prompted, the biographer quotes largely from his author's public writings when any such exist, under the notion of exhibiting Dr. Channing's mind. . . . The life, or even the mind, of a man is not properly exhibited by quotations from his writings, but by deductions from them. A biographer who acts in this way calls upon the reader to do his business, without giving him the materials. Into this error Mr. Channing has fallen, partly from over-anxiety, and partly from the undue estimate of his uncle which he naturally enough has formed.

This is the severest judgment I have found in any

conscientious journal, and this, besides being an individual opinion only, and on a matter which the editor of the memoir had himself carefully weighed, raises a question that admits of dispute. The theory on which the volumes were composed, namely, that the mind of a man could be best exhibited by his writings, was accepted after deliberate consideration; and the other theory, that "deductions" were more valuable than representative selections, was dismissed designedly, even after careful studies had been made to carry it out.

Mr. Parke Godwin, in the "*Harbinger*," spoke cordially of the execution of the work, which he did not find fault with on any account, and paid a tribute to Dr. Channing as one that "looked toward a new and scientific reconstruction of society."

Mr. Garrison reviewed the book in the "*Liberator*" for May 26th, and wrote: —

I do not know that a better tribute can be paid to it than to say that it will meet, nay, that it will exceed, the highest expectations that have been raised in regard to it. Nothing can be more admirable than the manner in which the author has discharged his sacred trust. . . . His readers will accord to him the spirit to appreciate all that was bright and excellent in the character of his uncle, the good sense to discard all fulsome panegyric, and the ability to complete one of the most interesting memoirs in our language.

It was not to be expected that Mr. Garrison should praise unreservedly a man so unlike himself in temperament, aim, experience, motive; a man, too, with whom he was in open collision in regard to the method of abolishing slavery. They had, we may presume, quite different purposes. Mr. Garrison's

main object was the extermination of a hateful system. Dr. Channing fixed his eye, as a Christian minister, on the religious elevation of both sections of the community. This included, naturally, the removal of an institution that stood directly in the way of such elevation; but did not imply a mode of assault that was, in his opinion, calculated to excite the very passions he was anxious to allay. This difference of aim, to say nothing of other differences, led to misunderstanding and animosity. Nevertheless, the down-right reformer, affected by the biography, which, he confessed, caused him to modify some of his judgments about Dr. Channing, could say:—

We have before us, in these volumes, a life-like delineation of the inner and the outward life of Channing, as sketched by his own hand from early boyhood to the close of his pilgrimage on earth. It is refreshing to contemplate it, it is so beautiful, so graphic, so full of sweet humility, so deeply imbued with humanity.

The writer then proceeds to give his impression of Dr. Channing, — an impression mainly just, but betraying a failure to perceive that he and the great preacher were setting before themselves different ends. That of the reformer was certainly the more practical, the more consonant with the actual condition of human character, the most successful. That of the preacher was the more delicate, thoughtful, spiritual, but demanded æons of time, and was, as it proved, impracticable in the immediate state of affairs. William Henry Channing's favorite scheme, so abortive in operation, of uniting both North and South in a grand act of sacrifice, was in close accord with his uncle's idea. No wonder that he too was miscon-

ceived. No wonder that he was denounced in England as an apologist of the slave-holder, because he ascribed to ignorance what others imputed to ill will; because he assumed a conscience of rectitude in all men, and would offend none.

The volume entitled the "Perfect Life," because that phrase most adequately expressed the design of the discourses, was published in Boston, in 1873, and was intended to present the strictly religious side of Dr. Channing's teaching. There were twelve sermons in all, occupying about three hundred pages. They were preceded by a short, simple preface, stating the reason for their preparation for the Federal Street congregation, the cast of their philosophical contents, their social and individual tendency. They are plain, unexcited, reasonable, to any one who grants the leading positions. The topic of the first is "The Religious Principle in Human Nature." The theme of the second is "God Revealed in the Universe and in Humanity." The third deals with the subject of "The Universal Father." Then comes "The Father's Love for Persons." This is followed by "Trust in the Living God." From this is evident the doctrine in the sixth, "Life a Divine Gift." The seventh teaches "The True End of Life." The eighth insists on "The Perfecting Power of Religion." The ninth, a Christmas sermon, closing with an invocation (the only one in his discourses), speaks fervently of "Jesus Christ, the Brother, Friend, and Saviour." The tenth explains "The Essence of the Christian Religion." The eleventh unfolds "The Perfect Life and End of Christianity." The twelfth closes the series by foreshadowing "The Church Universal." These sermons embodied Dr. Channing's ripe convictions. He speaks

of all minds as of one family, of the thought of immortal life as preceding the coming of Jesus, of the universal longing of all mankind for communion with the Infinite. They who thought that Unitarianism was merely a religion of common sense, and that religion itself was fully satisfied by good behavior, called these sermons "transcendental" and "visionary," but they simply expressed the preacher's mind. "Transcendental" and "visionary" they were, no doubt, but that was their recommendation in the preacher's opinion. The fundamental views were, to his apprehension, firmly grounded in human consciousness, which constitutes the essence of "Transcendentalism," and their logical consequence was a dream of perfection, which was revealed to the vision only, for it certainly was not present or actual. That these aspirations of the uncle gave countenance to those of the nephew must be apparent to every one that cares to see; but there is no reason for thinking that the selections were made because they lent the authority of a great name to doctrines that were novel or unpopular. William Henry Channing was above any action of that kind. The manuscripts were chosen in order that such justice as was possible might be rendered to Dr. Channing, who meant to publish the same ideas more fully, in a volume, had health been spared. This small reparation was all that could be made; and this came too late, as it proved. For the drift of speculation was going in another direction, and other names were in men's mouths.

Mr. Channing meditated for many years a comprehensive work, entitled "*Vittoria Colonna*," in which he intended, apparently, to sum up the results of his study on one of the glorious ages of the world.

He had taken notes, made memoranda, prepared lists of names, put down references to books, collected biographical materials of saints, theologians, philosophers, poets, men of letters, artists, builders, of the sixteenth century in Italy. The project was enormous, as the quantity of indications shows,—the notes alone filling a bulky package. The mere mass of material would daunt any but a drudging and unimaginative scholar. Mr. Channing probably never began to grapple with the task of composition. Such an enterprise must be undertaken piece by piece, attention being fastened on one episode at a time, and the facts concerning each epoch being gathered as they were needed. To survey the entire ground closely, at the outset, must be fatal to an elaborate exposition. The work, for this reason alone, never could have been finished, never could fairly be begun. The business of preparation was too fascinating. Mr. Channing may have been, as he often confessed, a procrastinator; he may have indulged himself in the luxury of reading and taking notes; he may have been prone to leave projects behind, and to drop a subject that had engrossed him, when some new interest seized his attention. But these intellectual defects, while they unquestionably interfered with completeness of execution, may, for this very reason, evince extraordinary mental activity, an eager, full mind, a feverish hunger for knowledge. This, in fact, he had. Such was his ardor of pursuit, his intensity of feeling, his firmness of conviction, his assurance of certainty, that he wanted to publish everything,—sermons, essays, lectures, newspaper articles. The fly-leaf of his copy of the “*Spirit of the Age*” expresses an earnest wish that in the event of his not

writing "the book I have so long meditated, on the 'The Law of Life,' a selection may be printed from this volume, and from the 'Present,' 'Harbinger,' 'The Gospel of To-Day,' 'Christian Socialism,' etc., etc., as expression of my Credo and Spero." He kept clippings, notices, speeches, casual arguments, and marked them "very important," as doubtless they were, in his mature estimation; but he seems to have carried the same zeal elsewhere. It must be admitted, however, that his zeal always preserved the same quality; the form might change, but the aim did not; the chase was along one track; the end kept in view never varied; and while the volumes might, had they been issued, have amounted to as many as fifteen or twenty, they would have contained but different illustrations of one cardinal idea, — that of the immanent Spirit. There is something exceedingly touching in these incomplete sketches of work, that show so much labor and such strenuous life. So much soul, as well as so much intellect, had been put into them! They were not designed for effect, or planned from any motive of ambition, but were thrown out because the man felt that he had a word to say; and, that it might reach the heart, it was made attractive to the ear. All the resources of literature were not enough, in his estimation, to proclaim the message of the Spirit.

After the death of R. W. Emerson, his old friend and fellow-worker wrote a glowing article on the Preacher, Orator, Lecturer, Scholar, Reformer, Citizen, Patriot, Friend, which was published in the London "Inquirer" for May 6, 1882, and, as if this was not enough, as if Edwin P. Whipple in his article for the "North American Review," and R. Heber New-

ton in his "magnificent summing up" had not done full justice, he prepared another paper on "Emerson, regarded as the Poet-Seer and Mystic-Saint." Both productions overflow with the admiration, eloquence, and impassioned ideality of all his writing. The same exuberant expression, the same tendency to glorify, the same overbearing optimism, is characteristic of everything that came from his pen. He was fault-finding only in moments. He pelted his enemies with roses. Cold he could not be. His power of discrimination might sometimes be suspected, his cordiality of appreciation never. It is a great deal to be sure that one gets the best of everybody. His testimony to the character of his friend George Ripley threw the light of love upon the pathway of the reformer, and thus probably interpreted the grand enterprise of the man's life as mere criticism could not do. The illumination of sympathy adds to the completeness of thought. When the correspondence between Carlyle and Emerson appeared, Mr. Channing took occasion to say that his countryman showed to great advantage by the side of the Scotchman, and praised anew the graciousness that could forgive Carlyle's apparent disbelief in the strivings after human perfection.

XVIII.

THE PERSON.

THE longer one lives, the more closely one observes, the larger is one's experience of mankind, the more evident it becomes that character is the real seat of power ; that humility, aspiration, devoutness, sincerity, purity, honor, simplicity, love of truth, command the respect of mankind. Here was a man, without title, preferment, professional rank, floating about from place to place, engaged in unpopular causes, holding opinions which few sympathized with, even when they were comprehended, of no ecclesiastical or literary fame ; yet, nevertheless, he bears the most searching inspection, and the more keenly he is examined the more worthy of esteem he appears. Admiration is not too strong a word to use when describing him. Theodore Parker, a clear-sighted, candid, and by no means prejudiced judge, called him, in the privacy of his journal, —

A most delightful man, full of the right spirit ; a little diseased in the region of consciousness, but otherwise of most remarkable beauty of character ; full of good tendencies, of noblest aspirations ; an eye to see the evils of society, a heart to feel them, a soul to hope better things ; a willingness to endure all self-denial to accomplish the end whereto he is sent ; not covered with thickest wrappages, which rather obscure his worthy uncle,

And Mrs. Lydia Maria Child, writing to a friend,

in 1865, says: "I received a letter last week from William H. Channing, in acknowledgment of funds sent to the freedmen of his department. He is the same infinite glow that he was when he took my heart captive twenty years ago." She then quotes an overflowing passage from the letter, expressing his emotion on the 31st of January, the day on which the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution — that prohibiting slavery within the United States — passed the House of Representatives, and was sent for ratification to the legislatures of the several States. "The true soul! The beautiful soul!" she writes on the envelope of one of his letters. On November 7, 1869, acknowledging his thoughtfulness in sending her tickets to his Lowell Lectures, she wrote: "This country cannot afford to spare such sons as you are. I have never liked to think of you as expatriated. I thank you from my heart for your expressions of friendship, which I most cordially reciprocate." There was no more simply truthful person in the world than Mrs. Child. George Ripley, a man not given to emotion, on the occasion of a painful passage about slavery, published in "The Harbinger," exclaims, "Oh, my brother, differ we may, though not often, but quarrel never."

Mr. Channing was by temperament vehement, high-spirited, sensitive on points of personal honor, with the pride of a gentleman, and the tenacity of principle that belongs to a chivalrous nature. Consequences, outward consequences, were nothing to him in comparison with ideas. There was a good deal of the knightly soldier in his composition. He was a champion against evil, and flung his banner to the breeze, wishing his colors to be seen, even when the enemy

were in force directly in front of him. He speaks of having to repress passion ; if he did so, the bitterness of struggle did not appear on the surface of his soul. I have looked in vain for serious deficiencies, such as call for grave rebuke or blame. Possibly a shade of envy crossed his spirit occasionally, but it was only for an instant, and it was immediately banished by hearty joy at the success of a comrade. He was often tired, frequently discouraged ; that he felt his loneliness, his practical inefficiency, the perpetual warfare and opposition to which he was exposed, the constant friction of his lot, was natural. But his cheer was high, his courage undaunted, his endeavor faithful, his hope boundless. His cares he kept to himself. Sorrow lasted only for a night. " We must not make too much of sorrows," he says in one of his letters. " Our earth floats in sunshine, forever, and all shall be well."

And this buoyancy, it must be admitted, was due to his faith. He was through and through religious at heart, broadly, freely, enthusiastically so ; religious on all occasions, in all companies ; not with piety of words or forms, but with a cordial reference to the Supreme Will. Everywhere he saw the Divine beauty and beneficence. In a letter addressed to a classmate, in 1879, he writes : —

These blessed birthdays come each year, overweighted with blessings. How can our hearts grow large, and bright, and pure, and sweet, and musical enough to serve as fitting Bethels for the descending angels ? Make room in the inner temple " for thine inflowing, for thine indwelling, O Life of life," becomes one's constant prayer. Enlarge our hearts, wills, minds, to dwell in thy grandeur, O our Supreme Good ! Possess us to the uttermost of our

capacities, that we may possess Thee in all thy plenitude in our inmost being. And so the heart goes chanting on that touching hymn of Faber : —

“O Majesty unspeakable and dread !
Wert Thou less mighty than Thou art,
Thou wert, O Lord, too great for our belief,
Too little for our heart.”

He tells the same classmate, Rev. Samuel May, of Leicester, Mass., that from his boyhood it had been his habit to rise early and devote the whole morning, from first waking till breakfast-time, to meditation, reading pious authors, aspiration, and prayer.

Always by my bedside have been the chosen “Morning Companions ;” and careful to disturb none who needed more sleep, by making a fire, etc., wrapped in a dressing-gown, or railway rug, or shawl, I have lighted my candle and read. My best spiritual friends and confidants have thus been gained. And among them have ranked in chief Kung-Foh-Tsee (Confucius) and Lao-Tsee, the Bhagavat Geeta and Buddha’s Laws of Life, in the Dhamma Pada, the Gathas of the Avesta, Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* of Socrates, Plato’s *Dialogues*, Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, the grandest Alexandrians, Philo, Proclus, and Plotinus ; and within the specially sacred centre, the Book of Job, the CXIXth Psalm, Isaiah the golden-lipped, and sublime Jeremiah, the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, the heroic Paul, the prophetic John. The central morning and noontide sun, of course, has been, and ever more radiantly bright, the glory of God in the face of Jesus, — Origen, Chrysostom, and Augustine ; next, in mediæval and scholastic times, St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bernard, and the school of St. Victor and Anselm, Johannes Scotus (Erigena), etc. ; thence, passing through the author of the *Theologia Germanica*, St. Thomas à Kempis, Tauler, and Heinrich Suso, and Eckhardt, etc., down to the Reformers before the Reformation, among whom was Val-

deso and Bernardo Ochino ; and outside the Catholic circle, Giordano Bruno ; and thence to the great Reformers. . . . But this is fast growing into a catalogue of the " books of the saints ; " — and some of the best are omitted, such as the blessed saints St. Gertrude and St. Theresa, St. Francis d'Assisi (whose life is lying beside me), St. Philip Neri and St. Carlo Borromeo, and perhaps more nearly and dearly loved still, as a father confessor, St. Francis de Sales, that peerless comforter and guide ; and we must not seem to slight the heavenly Port Royalists, Madame Guyon and beloved Fénelon. Then too the grand poets, like Dante, and the grand artists, like Michel Agniolo (as he liked to spell his name), are ungratefully passed by. And there is no room to speak of the moderns, such as glorious Fichte, nor of the sublime mystics, such as Boehme, and Swedenborg, and Spinoza, etc. But actually, and *bonâ fide*, dear recorder ! these and like-minded ones have been through the past half-century your friend's morning companions.

Lest any should still think that this was a mere list of names, drawn from memory, and the above nothing but a fancy sketch, I will cite his daughter's testimony, given me in a private communication respecting her father's customary ways : —

Of late years we had formed a habit of meeting together in the early morning, — that is, before breakfast, — for devotional exercises. These consisted of the reading of selections from several Scripture text-books ; of a hymn, taken from a rich Wesleyan-Methodist collection oftener than elsewhere, and read aloud by my father ; and of the Lord's Prayer ; always ending with a reverently-spoken benediction, or more properly an invocation of blessing. These brief exercises were a mere supplement to my father's private ones, which often began at five A. M., or earlier, and which lasted for several hours. With the sunlight coming in at the eastern window in summer, and the choir of house sparrows chirping out-of-doors, he sought grateful " streams

of refreshing" from many and various sources. The Scriptures, — in English or Greek, or both, — the Catholic fathers and saints, Thomas à Kempis, Thomas Aquinas, "blessed Henry Suso," Augustine, St. Theresa, St. Gertrude, St. Francis de Sales (a real friend of his), and the scarcely less well-loved Father Grou, Dr. Channing, Swedenborg, Fichte, and the wise truth-seekers of pagan times, Socrates, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, were among his ministers. His private books are so marked and remarked, in black, red, or violet, that they almost appear to have been illuminated! I have now by me, as I write, my father's private copy of the "Imitation," a very precious legacy. In it is written "Blessed book! What a Comforter, Inspirer, Guide, has it been to me! Amen." The custom of beginning each day with meditation and prayer was a second nature, and he could not bear any intrusion of secular matters into this "holy place," of early communion. When absent from home, he thought of us at the accustomed hour, and communed with us in spirit.

One of his "most beloved morning companions" was a Benedictine monk of the thirteenth century, a prayer by whom he was fond of: —

Never hath the malice of the evil one prevailed to frustrate thy majestic work, O thou resplendent Wisdom of God; neither hath the perverse ignorance of man ever turned aside thy merciful decrees. The greatness of our sins has been powerless against the multitude of thy mercies, the immensity of thy love, the plenitude of thy goodness. Thy kingly might hath swept away every obstacle before Thee. O Wisdom! deign to triumph over me, thy worthless creature! Consume with the breath of thy mouth, which is the Holy Spirit, whatever in me obstructs thy sovereign will. Bestow upon me the Mighty Love which wilt make me die to myself, and live alone in Thee. Thou wilt cover me with thy charity as with a mantle, with thy tenderness as with a garment! And Thou wilt seal with

me the compact of thine Eternal Love. Oh receive me, even as a mother receives to her bosom the child she had lost.

Do you not feel sure that what we so stupidly call "Death" will be only a new "Stage of Conversion," such as is described with such sweet truth by Faber? How wonderfully has the Spirit of our spirits and the Life of our lives guided us through dark valleys of trial, — each seeming like some "cul-de-sac," without issue for escape, amidst the dungeon vaults of doubt; and then suddenly, at a short turn in the flinty pathway, opened before our dazzled eyes a glorious vista of verdant lands, bathed in sunny lustre, and softly whispered, "Dear child! from this thy Pisgah behold the promised land of thy Inheritance. There is thy home, and my free gift to thee." Each new conversion bears us up higher, and widens our horizon.

There is no end of quoting passages in similar vein. But one more extract must be given to render his opinion on this subject of death perfectly clear. It is from a letter to Mr. May, dated "Easter Monday, April 18, 1881." It may be premised that these days of the Church were of great significance to him: —

Does not our habitual gloom, associated with the sublime transition from the natural to the spiritual degree of existence, arise from an unconscious yet all-pervading practical atheism? We think, feel, speak, of the abyss of nothingness, as the source out of which we and all creatures spring, and into which all things are in constant peril of lapsing again! But what an utter illusion such a "spectre" is! There is no Nothing; there never was, nor can possibly be! The Universe is a pleroma of living energies incessantly flowing out from, subsisting on, and contained in the living being of the living God, who essentially is life. There is no infinitesimal room for Nothing anywhere or anywhere; because all is full to overflow of inflowing

substantial, real existence, unintermittedly renewed by wave after wave of energy pulsating from the heart and brain of the Eternal One. God never began; God will never end. He is Now. And being in himself the intense activity of all loving will, never, from eternity to eternity, can He even be conceived of as alone! an Infinite Solitary! Every power of our spirit, heart, reason, conscience, imagination, capacity for joy, etc., conspire to prophesy in one pæan of praise that the Infinitely Good, Wise, Holy, Blessed, Beautiful, Joyous Lover loves others, infinitely innumerable others, in hosts on hosts of societies of spirits, each of which, as a whole and in each constituent member images Himself. If God is thus the God of the living in infinite, eternal love, and if we come from his life, live in it, and can never escape out of it, how can we but live immortally?

This was his creed, stated again and again in formal epistle, in casual note, in sermon and speech. In 1874 he describes himself as experiencing a new birth:—

It is a new spring with me, really, sincerely. This morning I consecrated myself, as the first act, by an entire, full, exact, uncompromising renewal of my baptismal vows, and gave myself like a little new-born child into the arms of our Father, and with the blessing of his Beloved Son, sealed by his Spirit of Universal Love, overflowing and filling my whole being. Rejoice with me, and praise the All good and gracious Father for me and with me, that at length, although to my utter shame so very late in life, I am indeed and in truth new born.

It is surprising that such an excess of feeling did not swamp his intellectual perceptions. Yet it did not. He could not enter heartily into the fervors of the Moody and Sankey revival. He continued to the last in cordial association and affiliation with Unit-

rians; and spoke with interest of devout men who had left the Christian communion. What is still more to the purpose, his daily life was natural and sweet, quite free from everything like overstrained excitement. His nervous temperament found this outlet for his emotion. In all things, he was from the beginning intense. His bursts of feeling were like the jets of steam from a locomotive engine before the driving forces move the train. It is difficult to say whether the personal purity for which he was distinguished owed most to natural disposition or to religious persuasion. One thing is certain: it was seen by all men before these raptures of piety came on, even in his transcendental days. Parker noticed it. When Emerson's children were very young, indeed, and there was talk of "christening" them, and Mr. Emerson hesitated because they were purer than any minister he knew, William Channing did it. This story is told by Mr. Conway, in his volume about "Emerson at Home and Abroad," and is also alluded to, as an incident, on the occasion of his "christening" the child's child, many years afterward. Thus the whiteness preceded the ecstasy. So did the delicate sense of duty, the passion for truth, the thirst for spiritual peace, the impulse to adore, worship, aspire, the longing after perfection. Even as a school-boy he wrote prayers, meditations, musings on divine things.

His loyalty to conscience was absolute. There was never a time when conscience was less than the voice of God in the heart; there was never a time when he did not firmly believe that to be one with God was to be in the majority. He was capable of any self-denial; nay, he rejoiced in it. He was afraid of noth-

ing. Poverty, loneliness, obloquy, disappointment, were but names in his ears. He could face dissenting crowds; he could rebuke friends. Danger and even death were shadows. To do what he believed to be right was his sole aim, cost what it might. The incident of his taking the arm of the black man in Washington, in defiance of an angry mob, has been mentioned. Once at Rondout, during a season of panic on account of cholera, he met a poor fellow, faint and ill, on the sidewalk. He stopped to inquire into his condition; and, learning that he had been cast out of his home by his wife, and was helpless, forlorn, hungry, he led the man to his miserable house, went in, upbraided the inmates, saying, "What horrid nonsense is this?" and formally restored the invalid. During the war he had no hesitation in holding wounded men, diseased men, in his arms, or nursing the infected. Many a time did he expose himself to contagion in hospital or camp, without dreaming of personal peril, being convinced that he was in the way of his simple duty.

This devotion to his idea of rectitude explains the extraordinary frankness that characterized him. He made it a rule never to say anything of another, behind his back, that he would not say to him directly. In 1842 he wrote thus to Mr. Emerson:—

I have read with renewed interest, and several times re-read, your address at the Theological School, and admit now, as I did when I heard it, that it says all that can be said from that point of view. It is a poem in its way. But I feel distinctly, my honored friend, in relation to this address, what I feel in relation to all that I have read of your writings, that there is one radical defect, which, like a wound in the bark, wilts and blights the leaf and bloom

and fruit of your faith. *You deny the Human Race.* You stand, or rather seek to stand, a complete Adam. But you cannot do it.

Then he goes on to develop his doctrine of the Church as the representative of Divine Humanity, of inspiration as the breath of the Creator informing all history, of Christ as the God-Man. Again : —

You said this winter, “A strong man never repeats ; he is satisfied with one word. He contents himself with leaving his mark upon the great questions of his day, and passes by.” Such an assertion has no more echo from me than a snow shower does from the earth. If a single thought or word may worthily be given to any prominent interest, then must that interest rightfully demand your best sympathy and aid till the work is accomplished. You are enlisted for the war, under any banner you have once waved, and it should be nailed to the staff. I feel claims on you as a religious and social teacher which I do not grant that you have met, bountiful as you have been.

I remember how, on the platform of the Free Religious Association, he ventured, before a large audience, to criticise the leaders of the society ; and before me is a copy of the “*Liberator*” containing the bold words he uttered before Garrison, Parker, Stephen and Abby Foster, H. C. Wright, and others, at the spring meeting of 1850. On this somewhat famous occasion he delivered his soul in regard to telling the whole truth, so that one’s meaning could not be misunderstood, and in defense of his doctrine of coöperation between North and South, for the final removal of slavery. Such courage is exceedingly rare. Physical bravery is not unusual ; when nervous excitement is keenly stimulated, it is common. Moral courage is often seen, particularly when personal

pride is aroused, or the issue is broad and plain. But this kind of valor, this chivalrous daring that insists on braving misconception for a moral distinction, when aims are alike, is very seldom witnessed. Mr. Channing was alone among my acquaintances in the utter unconsciousness, the absence of bravado or affectation, the cordial courtesy, with which he stood in breaches. A British officer, on the morning of the frightful battle of the Alma, appeared in full uniform, and otherwise dressed with peculiar care. His image comes to mind as I think of Channing in the midst of fight. There was a good deal of the warrior about him. The heroic policy pleased him best. Even in statesmanship, much as he sympathized with a pacific course, he had the national honor at heart, and grieved to see nobility sacrificed to expediency, even the most amiable. He was a sort of modern Sir Galahad, ever in search of the Holy Grail, and ever beholding it in vision. "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," he always seemed to be announcing; and such was the power of his conviction that the absolute right must be visible to all men that every vestige of disbelief was, for the moment, swept away. With all this there was no stiffness, no austerity. Far from it; he was always ready for a joke, punning, entering into gayety, making sport of comical incidents, seeing the funny side of ordinary experiences. "Boots or no boots," he was prepared to shout, remembering the new convert who was promised a pair of boots if he would repress his vociferous enthusiasm in meeting, but who finally broke his silence and his word together by exclaiming "Hallelujah," at some burst of eloquence.

Intellectually, too, he was an exception to ordinary

rules. He was eminently an intellectual man. His mind was affluent, hungry, alert. He devoured books, in theology, philosophy, ethics, physics, metaphysics, æsthetics, history, literature of all kinds, and was curiously learned in remote lore. He studied the skies, knew the stars, loved wide views from high places, climbed hills, sought sunlight and space. His mental horizon was boundless, as if he could not see far enough, as if all knowledge, being instinct with Deity, could help his range of vision. But his mind needed *compression*, the weight of other intellects. When "cornered," as it were, he exhibited surprising acuteness, as one narrows his eyelids in order to see small objects. He became discerning then; could look all round a subject, and make himself acquainted with its smallest practical details. He divided, and sub-divided, and sub-sub-divided. He possessed a remarkable coolness, address, subtlety in debate. He was able to preside at a discussion, to hold all the points justly, to give to every speaker his due, to each consideration its weight, rightly dividing the word of truth. He could be perfectly fair to an opponent. His interest was warm, yet it was impartial and impersonal. He was profoundly absorbed in politics, for instance, that most exciting of themes, but his enthusiasm did not carry him away, or tend to blind him.

When he preached his first antislavery sermon at Cincinnati, one of his warmest friends, sitting in a conspicuous pew, got up and left the church. The wife was much disturbed, and tried to apologize to Mr. Channing after the service. But he was not wounded by the occurrence, and in the heartiest manner invited himself to dinner, for a friendly talk.

Still, notwithstanding all this, perhaps because of it, his tenure on terrestrial affairs was slight. He was not an organizer. He could not make movements *march*. The element of common sense, an element born of the working understanding, was wanting to him. He was somehow deficient in sagacious judgment. His kite, attached to the earth by a string, held in a boy's hand, and easily cut, had no relation with the ground, but was meant to fly in the air. He was fond of analogies, symbols, similitudes, metaphors. He dealt in large generalizations, swift inferences, rapid deductions, elevated flights of reason. Specialists in knowledge complained of his lack of proportion and completeness. The scientific method of standing by the discovered fact he did not appreciate. Criticism ran off him as rain runs off the surface of an india-rubber coat. For example, he admitted that Jesus, as an Essene, "derived his training and impulses through the communications of the hope and faith and love of that body;" that "the shape of his prophetic thoughts was Jewish;" that "books which transmit the record of his life were probably the story of his apostles;" that, "however originated, these books are seemingly so intermingled with improbable narratives and assertions that we are forced to accept their conclusions with much hesitation and limitation;" that "the Church has fallen into all manner of monstrous exaggerations and distortions of the truth." And yet he maintains that Jesus was a "Providential person," the "God-Man;" that "he did not err or exaggerate in declaring himself the Son;" that "he was all and more than he asserted;" that he taught "a Heaven growing out of Humanity." A mind like Parker's cannot put these conclusions to-

gether. Either the first set or the last must be dismissed. But Mr. Channing did not perceive how one compromised the other. The "coupling" between the ideas seemed to be lost. It was the same in other matters. Louis Blanc's scheme of "national workshops," in 1848, looked reasonable to him; nor did he see any objection to Queen Victoria's visiting this country. He thought that his lecture on the religion of China, a discourse containing passages from the writings of Chinese sages, would influence the conduct of the people in San Francisco towards the immigrants from the "Celestial Empire," just as he was surprised at the hardness of the countrymen of Richter, Klopstock, and Lessing in their animosity towards the French.

A signal proof of this lack of working insight was given by his plan for removing slavery by a mutual effort on the part of both North and South. It was noble, magnanimous, Christian; but no movement was ever based upon it, while societies of the Garrisonian stamp, founded on the idea of guilt in slaveholding and sin in countenancing it, increased, some years, at the rate of one each day.¹ The noble thing and the sensible thing were inseparable in his eyes. This was magnificent, but magnificence and feasibility are, unfortunately, not synonymous. It is not reserved to many to walk on the ground and to fly through the air at the same time. He was lyric, not dramatic. A curious confirmation of this is his fondness for beautiful things, his indifference to scenic displays. He loved paintings, flowers, music, but seldom went to the theatre. There are frequent mentions of concerts, but only one that I have met with

¹ *Life of Garrison*, i. 243.

of actors or actresses, or dramatic authors of any degree. And in music his taste was for the more ethereal kind, — Bach, Beethoven, Spohr, parts of Mendelssohn. His delight was in strains that touched his soul, — in Handel's "Messiah," in Jenny Lind's singing, in the violin playing of Sivori.

His personal affections were very strong. His love for his mother amounted to veneration. His love for his wife, children, grandchildren, was abounding, tender, considerate, sympathetic, anxious; he melted into their moods, aided their studies, applauded their efforts, admired their tastes, praised their qualities. He was happy with the young, entering into their pursuits, sharing their sports, climbing hills with them, reading stories to them, teaching them. On one occasion, crossing the ocean immediately after his sister's death, he consoled himself by entertaining a little blind girl who had no mother; and to his own little girl he read aloud books that were irksome to himself. During his long stay at Leeds, in 1876, at Glasgow, Brighton, and elsewhere, he wrote daily to his family in London, and his little notes bubbled over with love. He had pet names for those near to him, and used by certain signs to signify caresses. He sends to Mr. Emerson, with copious expressions of praise, his son Frank's two Oxford essays, and in the note accompanying them the father's joy bursts forth.

If the notes from Leeds and other places, the letters home from America, the sketches of him by his son and daughter, could be printed, — they are for the most part too personal, — my language would be seen to be moderate. A line or two in regard to "little Bettie," his son's daughter, who died in childhood,

reveals the character of his affection : " The memory of her glorious morning prime enriches one's imagination with an ideal type of what childhood always should be ; and as an ever young, blue-eyed, brightly beaming, gently smiling cherub, she scatters flowers of hope on the upward path as she enters into glory and beckons us to follow. It was an ever fresh pleasure to walk with the picturesque little pilgrim." The whole letter is a sign of his intense feeling for the young. The angelic in them he never failed to discern, even when they were comparative strangers ; but when personal ties were added the heart fairly ached with tenderness. Some of the notes must be printed to give an idea of his lovingness : —

15 BLENHEIM TERRACE, WOODHOUSE LANE, LEEDS,
Good Friday, 1870.

It has been a gloriously bright day, though the northeast wind has been keen and cutting. This morning was an hour of illumination ; and it would have refreshed me, as a listener, to hear what came streaming through me like jets of solar fire. How wonderful these experiences of radiance from the fountain of everlasting day are, and how they fill us with grateful awe !

This afternoon we have been to see the gathering of the Bands of Hope on the steps and in the square of the Town Hall. There were several thousands present, with banners, wreaths, and garlands, and with an accompaniment of brass bands they sang very sweetly in unison some stirring hymns, and among them Sankey's " Over There." It was most affecting to look at these groups of children and parents, and think of the homes which may be kept green and sweet by rivers and vales of temperance, and blasted with fires of hell by drink. Certainly it was a Good Friday for these little ones.

Yesterday we went out beyond Headingley, and there

was no chance to write, so accept these hasty lines for two days.

Thanks, darling Susie, for your sweet note this morning, following dear mamma's of yesterday. May the benedictions of my note be fulfilled beyond your highest hope. With warmest love and blessings for both and all, yours ever devotedly and tenderly,

W. H. CHANNING.

Pardon haste. A friend is waiting to take this to the P. O., as they keep Sunday order to-day.

OAKFIELD, MOSELEY, NEAR BIRMINGHAM,

Monday, September 29, 1873.

DEAREST JULIE MARIE AND SUSIE DARLING, — Glorious morning! Silvery white frost glistening on the grassy lowlands, and bluish haze softening the wooded slopes and hill-sides. A delicious little robin woke me with his matin song.

Yesterday was a great day at the Church of the Messiah: the galleries crowded with the Sunday-school children, three to four hundred in number, and the pews below filled with their parents and friends added to the congregation. The church was so full in the evening that the aisles up to the pulpit were lined with benches and chairs. The children sang their anthems and hymns with great enthusiasm and correctness. The large assemblies were exceedingly attentive; and the day altogether was good.

To-day I am soon off to the picture gallery, the Shakespeare Library, the Graham School, manufactures, etc. At three Mr. and Mrs. K., from Brookline, near Boston, take luncheon here; and this evening is the school meeting for tea and talk.

To-morrow, by as early a train as will not be inconvenient to my host and hostess, I shall leave. But do not delay your dinner. And in the evening I will come for you at Fannie's. And now, my darlings, with warmest love and kisses, ever,

W. H. CHANNING.

16 HORNTON STREET, KENSINGTON, LONDON WEST,
Thursday, August 12, 1875.

MY DEAREST DARLINGS, — Just returned to our lonely home. I have just knelt up-stairs to ask our Father's blessing on you, and then seated myself in the chair at the piano, to recall our sweet hymns and closing service last evening. Never did my whole heart so go out to both of you in tender love; never did I so deeply thank the Father for the holy ties which bind us together; never was I so grateful to you each, and both, for your overflowing affection to me; never did I more earnestly long to be with you in a serene, steadfast home of our own, however humble, no more to be separated, till we are called to the home on high. We have never been so truly happy in and for one another as now. Thanks, ever fresh thanks, to the Father of lights, from whom cometh every good gift. Amen.

The golden edge of the clouds against the clear blue, in the west, promises a pleasant afternoon for you. So it is well you went to-day. We passed through the shadow and turmoil together. And by this time the sun is shining upon you, I trust, in Colchester. To-morrow I shall look eagerly for your note, describing your experiences, in your little box, where you settled down into shape, somehow, probably, — birds, bundles, boy, and all. Ha! ha!

My warmest love to dearest Fannie, and the grandsons, and all. I shall hope to see them on Monday. And now, once more, my darlings, with blessing and kisses, ever yours, devotedly,

W. H. CHANNING.

And now for "D. L. M., his Life and Works." Splendid afternoon, here, four P. M.

58 SPRINGFIELD PLACE, LEEDS, *Friday, October 15, 1875.*

MY DEAREST MARIE AND SUSIE, — No letter this morning, doubtless owing to the storm yesterday, and not to any severer cause, I hope. And unreasonable though it is, I

look for my morning flowers on the breakfast table. My note reached you, I trust, for it was posted in full time, in the nearest box. Next week, we can scarcely interchange notes every day. Yet a post-card even, saying "All's well," is a comfort. Do you hear my morning texts? Would that I could hear your evening hymns. How sweet those last two evenings were! Keep up the music, my darlings.

This morning I have been passing several hours at the infirmary, with my excellent friend Mr. Brown, of Barden Grange. There we found his daughter, distributing flowers to the patients, which she does every week. There too I met my friend Mr. John Lupton, of Headingley. Mr. B. and he are at this hospital once, at least, every week. Indeed, Mr. L. is there much oftener. I was introduced, also, to the chaplain, a young Episcopal clergyman, who has just returned from America, greatly pleased with his visit. He married an American lady, from Philadelphia, and has left her and their two children to pass the winter with her friends. I could not but think of Frankie boy and L. and their babies. He is a singularly vigorous, healthful, cheerful person, who carries sunshine with him as he goes, and seemed much loved by the patients. It will not do to wear a long face here, however sad the sights. "'T would be as bad as a pestilence. So we try to make all bright," said he, smilingly. In the "operating room" I asked, "You are here, sometimes, I suppose?" "Always, if possible. I wish them all to know me as their sympathizing friend," he replied. He has a short service in the wards every day, and regular Sunday services in their beautiful chapel. From the neighboring mines and mills and railroads they receive severe cases of accident, as well as many sick poor. One ward is entirely given to little children. I saw one pretty little girl with a great doll lying beside her. They need more dolls, I fancy. Many seemed to be playing games. Pictures are hung round the walls, and bright metal-

lic reflecting globes swing in the air. A large musical box was playing cheerfully. But brighten the scene as one will, it is sad to see these little sufferers. There was one baby thriving, the mother recovering from terrible illness. How much there is to do in the world when one sets about it! But a visitor is coming. So I must close for to-day. Our Father bless and guard and guide us each and all, and may his peace be with us. Yours, ever lovingly, my darlings,

W. H. CHANNING.

58 SPRINGFIELD PLACE, LEEDS, *January 3, 1876.*

DEAREST MARIE AND SUSIE, — Yesterday was our communion Sunday; and the Spirit led me to a renewed consecration to the real Christ life. Let us each make this our central aspiration, hope, and aim for this opening year, for ourselves, for one another, for all we love, and for all around us; so shall 1876 become a blessed season of spiritual new birth and growth for our whole family, Heaven grant.

To-day began the week of united prayer throughout Christendom, and I attended the meeting from twelve to one, in the Young Men's Association. If possible, it is my purpose to attend each day. Such a simultaneous gathering, throughout all nations, is very touching and animating. Your zealous vicar will of course enter into it.

The weather will be soon pleasant enough to permit your attending the Exhibition of Old Masters at Burlington House, let us hope. The critics speak very highly of the portraits, especially, the Reynolds, Gainsboroughs, and Romneys, for there are the choicest gems of each. Tell me about them, when you can.

So with grateful and tenderest love, my darlings, and prayers and blessings for each and all, I am ever yours, devotedly,

W. H. CHANNING.

58 SPRINGFIELD PLACE, LEEDS,
Wednesday, February 2, 1876.

This has been a most busy and fatiguing though interesting day, my darlings. For the "Bopangs," under the guidance of my devoted and indefatigable friend, D. L., has been on the tramp, inspecting the "Boys' Industrial School," the Work-House, the Hospital, the Infirmary for the Insane, the 'Orphans' School, etc. Would that time permitted the least sketch of what was seen. One thought, constantly present, was this: "Why, if society is at such enormous expense to relieve suffering, sin, and folly, after they have been produced by social neglect, can it not expend half the sums, time, care, and energy, in preventing them?" Next, "How goodness abounds and overflows everywhere, when we give it a chance to spring up and run freely, and do not fill up the fountain with mud and filth, and then turn the brooks and rills into a quagmire!" Ah me! We mortals are rather clumsy and stupid than bad, after all. Well! No moment for moralizing to-day.

Last evening my young German passed two hours or more. He was bred a Churchman; and my advice to him was, "still to go to church with his mother, and to go to the communion with her, according to her wishes." Our talk encouraged and cheered him much.

To-morrow, Fannie darling, for now I must be off again to hear Baldwin Brown's lecture. Soft spring weather and lovely moonlight. With warmest benediction and tenderest love, my darlings, ever fondly yours,

W. H. CHANNING.

"RANFURLY," MONTGOMERIE RD.,
GRT. WESTERN RD., GLASGOW,
Monday, March 13, 1876.

DEAREST MARIE AND SUSIE, — Thanks for your note received this morning, the wrong address notwithstanding, and I trust you are better. My cold has not increased,

though it is not much better, the weather is so raw and damp. Last night was magnificently bright, but to-day we have snow-showers. Last night the church was crowded and most earnest, and the collections were large. To-day I have spent several hours in going round the new Glasgow University, a finer mass of buildings, size, etc., considered, than can be found either at Oxford or Cambridge, though of course it does not remotely begin to compare with the rich monumental remains, exquisite architecture, statues, paintings, libraries, etc., of several colleges, at least, of the grand old universities. They have, however, the next complete collection of Bibles of all ages, to that of the British Museum, some 4,000 volumes; and the richest collection of ancient Greek and Roman coins in the world. We saw the students in their scarlet flannel gowns and caps moving to and fro in groups, there being about 1,500 in all departments of the university. In the museum, too, I saw some admirable specimens of asbestos with fibres some six inches or more long, and learned with surprise that a large company manufactures out of this inflammable material wrappings for the engines of steamers and locomotives, etc., in place of cotton. Wonderful is the inventiveness of this little straddling creature called man. But time is up.

To-morrow I hope to take the ten A. M. train, due at King's Cross at 8.30 P. M., and hope to be with you by 9.15. And now, with ever tender love, yours gratefully, hopefully, and devotedly, with love to F. and F. and all.

W. H. CHANNING.

HEADINGLEY, LEEDS, *Tuesday, April 2, 1876.*

A more glorious day than this, my darlings, has not blessed us for months, sunshine steeping in soft splendor the wide landscape, and the air resonant with the hymns of thrushes and blackbirds. May we all have spring-tide in our hearts.

Your sketches of the dear vicar grow brighter and

brighter, and you are enjoying the services to-day to the full, I trust. Let me hear all about it; and pray follow out each path that opens.

As it is necessary to see some of our congregation, this afternoon, before service, my note must be very short. And it is only written to keep *en rapport*, to let you know that I received yours this morning, with the papers, and that all is well and bright. After service, this morning, Mr. and Mrs. L. took me through their conservatories, to see the white, pink, orange, and scarlet azaleas in full splendor of pyramids of bloom. Then with Mr. L. I climbed to the summit of his tower to overlook the wide, undulating prospect, softened with a silvery haze.

But I must break off at once. So with tenderest love and blessings to each and all my darlings, including F. and F. and their darlings, I am most gratefully, trustingly, and hopefully yours, ever devotedly,

W. H. CHANNING.

LISCARD VALE, *Sunday, August 20, 1876.*

MY DARLINGS MARIE AND SUSIE, — It is just striking seven on this glorious morning; and the sunshine gilds the emerald of the lawn, kept fresh by heavy dews on the river side and the late rains, brings out delicate tints, like maiden-haired fern, in the wide-spreading acacia, whose plumelets fan softly in the morning breezes; while through the utter stillness some bells in distant church towers chime for matins. How holy is this temple-palace of Our Father!

For two hours the brightest and most encouraging memories, hopes, and visions have been pouring in upon me, from the ocean of beauty and love in which we are embosomed: memories of the blessed companies of sweet, true, good people whom we have known in England, the glorified and risen, as well as living, and memories of God's mercies since we all came hither; hopes, to-day, in dear old Renshaw

Street to testify to the heavenly perfections of the All Good, and to the splendor of his Image in his Well-Beloved Son, and to the immortal reality of communion by his Spirit with the Church universal of his united family, one on earth and in heaven; visions of what may yet be done to make some better returns for these exhaustless, ever fresh mercies of our Father, ere He recalls us, for to-day the future looks bright, and a new spirit of consecration has been given. Oh, may this day be fully blessed to you, my darlings.

How lovely, devoted, patient, generous, animating, you both were yesterday! How sweetly you pardoned, absolved me from, and atoned for my hurry and worry! Ah, do so always, my dearest ones. Let us be true to one another, as to ourselves in our high vocation. Called to be saints, let us help one another to become real children of God, raised to perfection after the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Amen. And so God bless you, and good-morning. Yours, ever tenderly and hopefully,

W. H. C.

A sparrow just hopped on my window-sill, tapped the window, and said good-morning. Was it Tommy's double? He has gone to carry back the word "All's well."

HIGH-CLOSE, LOUGHRIGG, AMBLESIDE,
August 24, 1876.

At length Paradise, my darlings. Would that you were with me. Imagine a humble farmstead beneath a grand, strong-trunked, wide-branching, densely-leaved sycamore, planted on a green promontory, projecting from a mountain-side, that suddenly felt prompted to grow into a palatial residence, out of great-hearted hospitality, in order that scores of guests, in constant pulses of coming and going, might share the joy of admiring the exquisite beauty of the surrounding panorama. And now behold the scene. Come to this arbor under spreading vines, with a circle of wooden seats carved from solid tree trunks, and look to the west.

Up the Langdales, a long-stretching wooded valley, we behold before us the dentated peaks in glowing splendor, against an azure dome curtained and fringed by cumuli. Nearest on the left is the rounder summit of Bow-Bell, purple in shadow, and between, on the far horizon, peeps over the scarred gray face of Scaur-Fell. While nearer still, greener in parts, and brown, curve the hollows and swell the ridged slopes of Wetherlane; and so onward over wooded summits the eye is led round to Windermere, light azure and gleaming on the south, and just beneath the steel-blue basin of Loughrigg tarn, above which swells to the east and north Loughrigg fells. Around the house are emerald lawns, and gardens all ablaze with gladiolus and roses, etc., bordered by pansies, etc. Till at last, having completed the circle, and returned to the nest of content and loving kindness, one asks, Why do we not always live like the children of the all-good Father, in a Paradise Regained? Surely He is ready, and his Beloved Son and the spiritual world are ready. Why are we so dead alive in half-faith and half-hope? But can you see the Paradise?

Within it are gathered my host, a perfect gentleman in manners, a liberal scholar and earnest Churchman, with his wife and her elder brother, a retired invalided Rector; then dear Canon Jackson, with his silver hair and spiritual eyes; and the Vicar of Dewsbury, a young, bearded, earnest-looking man, rather reserved; and a young Roman Catholic convert, driven out by the Syllabus and Vaticanism and the Roman Curia from his monastic home, — for he was a devoted "Passionist," — who has now joined the English Church. We have had some most interesting talks last evening and this morning, and we hope to have more. Never have I been in a more ideal home than this exquisitely ordered Eden, for the arrangements are absolutely perfect to the minutest detail. How did I deserve such a privilege! Why can you not share it? I wish you could go to Scotland; can

you not? But here I must break off for the post, which is but once a day. So with tenderest love and blessing,

Yours ever,

W. H. CHANNING.

HIGH-CLOSE, LOUGHRIGG, AMBLESIDE, WESTMORELAND,

Friday, August 25, 1876.

Paradise! Ever more Paradise, my darlings. Oh, the glory and beauty of this peerless place. Would, oh would, that you were both with me, and that we might pass one sweet, still, heavenly month at this place. It is the most perfect centre of sweetness I ever entered.

Yesterday afternoon we set off — four in an open carriage. Mr. Balme and Canon Jackson in front, our host driving a splendid pair, Mr. D., and I behind, — for Ray Castle, about six miles. As we drove on, the clouds gathered, bluish-gray deepening into purple, with a grayish border, ending in silvery sheen over the Langdale pikes, betokening an evening shower, and gradually veiling the mountains and lower slopes from sight, till just as we reached the large, arched, projecting porch of the castle the rain and wind beat down like a deluge. But we were in shelter, where we remained gazing up into the Gothic carved roof of the lantern over the hall, and out from the library windows, till the storm passed, except the pearly fringes still dropping into glittering light, as we drove off. But what a glorification, as we came in sight of the mountain! The “Old Man” of Conistoun, long-lying on the horizon to the southwest, was half hidden by the golden canopy of the sun-filled shower; to the northwest the Langdale pikes were in full lustre, the shadows of the projecting cliffs and passing clouds bringing out the expression of their giant faces, as, leaning on their elbows, they looked down the grassy glades of which they are guardians. And nearer were seven or eight overlapping ridges, each crowned with edges of trees, fringed and tipped with light. Till, as we drove on, we came to the tarn, where the scene was mirrored; a silvery fretwork of ripples crossing

and intersecting the picture, as the fleeting breezes dipped their wings in passage. The temple palace of Our Father King, the art-galleries of our Poet-Painter, the open golden gates of our Holy One!

We are enjoying heavenly talks and refreshings! To-morrow for "Cleator." As there is but one post a day, you will not receive my to-morrow's letter till Monday morning, remember. Thanks, my darlings, for your brief, sweet notes just come. And now with warmest, tenderest love and blessings for each and all, yours, ever hopefully,

W. H. CHANNING.

HIGH-CLOSE, LOUGHRIGG, AMBLESIDE, WESTMORELAND,

Saturday, August 26, 1876.

Oh, my darlings! Why are you not with me in this Eden! These three days have been so crowded full with beauty, joy, light, and life, that they seem like weeks!

Yesterday Mr. Balme on his pony, Mr. D., the young converted monk, by his side, and Canon Jackson and I behind, set off, over the ground in part described in Wordsworth's "Excursion," round the side of Loughrigg fells, for Fox-How, Dr. Arnold's old home, where Canon Jackson and I were to lunch. The road, after leaving Mr. Balme's grounds, runs among the bracken on the mountain-side, above the lake of Grasmere, with Fairfield and other mountains on the opposite side; and thence we looked down on the very scene sketched in the last book of the poem. Mr. Balme quoted and repeated as we walked along. At a tuft of larches just in sight of poor Hartley Coleridge's cottage, our host and his companion left us; and the dear canon and I passed on together, in deep communion, till passing the once dear home of Wordsworth's daughter and the residence of W. E. Forster, we entered the gate, amidst its blooming gardens, of Fox-How.

Here we found Miss Arnold, the youngest unmarried daughter of the blessed Dr. A., and Mrs. Matthew Arnold, — a gentle, rather pensive-looking lady in mourning, writ-

ing letters; and presently came in "Mat" himself (as every one calls him), and his younger brother Edward. M. A. is a much heartier, haler man in appearance than I expected to see, with black whiskers and mustache slightly browner, and a look of vigorous health that was refreshing to behold. One would take him for a boater, or cricketer, or mountain climber, rather than a scholar and writer. At luncheon he mentioned a good saying of Aubrey De Vere, with whom he had just been visiting a friend at Coniston: "I have one safe resource for making money, to stop publishing books." M. said it with a good-humored chuckle, as if he had some notion, from experience, of what his poet-friend meant. Miss Arnold gave me a most touching account of Wordsworth's last years, when, after his daughter's death, he used to stop, almost daily, to have a brief talk with Mrs. A. "Dear old man! How he grieved for her! How lonely he was!" After luncheon M. A. and I had a long and most interesting talk, in which he appeared far more genial, kindly, hopeful, than his writings would have led one to believe. . . . But here I must close for to-day, as it is breakfast time, and then I must be off for Cleator. So with tenderest love and blessings and prayers for our Father's grace and guidance for each and all, my darlings, yours, in good hope,

W. H. CHANNING.

Your note just come.

That William Henry Channing was supremely an idealist need not again be asserted. The ideal Church, the ideal State, the ideal Society, were ever before his fancy. Specific reforms seemed to him partial, incidental, fragmentary, unsatisfactory, as a patched garment. But he believed in penitence and in prayer, — in the downward as well as the upward look, — in the immediate and constant need of divine quickening, — in the Church, in the Gospel. He was

an idealist, as every one is who holds that there must be a germ in the soul of man to which the Heavenly Soul must appeal. But the influence was from above into the human being. The distrust of the understanding that was common to the Transcendentalists he undoubtedly shared; but the reason was, in his opinion, by no means competent to originate truth, or to do anything save to meekly apprehend it when presented by divine revelation. The initiative must be taken by the celestial Wisdom. A consciousness of personal worth and dignity he certainly had; an impression of the importance of his message; a sense of the significance of his word. But he was quite free from personal vanity, or a passion for distinction. With his actions he was satisfied, for he knew his own motives; but with his attainments, intellectual or spiritual, he was never satisfied. He was a better judge of principles than of men. Social he could hardly be called, though he liked congenial company. Individual characters were his delight, and his intercourse with them was always on a high, impersonal level, as his letters to Miss Anna Swanwick bear abundant testimony.

This man's life, it is said, was a failure. He lived in dream-land. He brought nothing to pass. He made no useful contribution to his age. He left no mark on his generation. He did but repeat the fancies of Boehme and Swedenborg. Be it so. Still, his friends did not think his career aimless or ineffective. Those whom he counseled, guided, inspired, encouraged in the way of nobler, purer, more humane, more spiritual life, did not. Those whom he delivered from materialism, atheism, selfishness, did not. I have letters about him and his influence that fairly throb with

emotion such as the best would love to believe they excited. The tributes paid at his funeral by men whom all honor could not be rendered to one whose days had vanished like a cloud. Mr. Whittier appreciated him, as this letter to Mr. Channing's niece proves: —

AMESBURY, 1st Mo., 12, 1885.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — I was greatly pained to hear of thy honored and beloved uncle's death. The world seems poorer, lacking his benign and beautiful presence. I have always regretted that I could not meet him oftener, for indeed he seemed very near to me. I know not where I can look for another combining all the gifts and graces which made him emphatically a Christian gentleman.

I am afraid it will not be possible for me to join you in paying the tribute of love and reverence at his funeral. But I shall be with you in spirit, sorrowing that I shall see his face no more, but grateful to our Heavenly Father for the gift to humanity of such a pure and noble life.

Thanking thee for thy kind letter, I am, dear Miss Higginson, thy sincere friend,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

These words, by a master of our American thought, — a calm, reflecting, judicious man, a man of historical tastes and ecclesiastical tendencies, — could not have been written of a mere floating visionary. "There abides with me," says Dr. Hedge, "an indelible impression of the beauty of his character. I have never known one which seemed to me so near perfection, sanctity without austerity, humility without self-depreciation, charity without weakness, purity without prudishness, severity selfward without censoriousness, but, on the contrary, boundless toleration of others' infirmities. If ever there was such, a sinless soul."

Dr. James Martineau, a warm friend, and his last visitor during his illness, wrote to the son, on hearing of Mr. Channing's decease: —

I cannot be surprised — nay, under the conditions of these latter days, I cannot be grieved — that the hour appointed for your beloved father's ascension has struck, and that we must henceforth think of him as among the saints departed. Never, I believe, was there a spirit more prepared for the higher life. I received his parting kiss as a consecration, sweetening and calming the small remainder of my time. It is a real sorrow to me that I am forbidden — and, as I well know, unfit — to undertake the last office which it would be so congenial to my love and reverence to perform. Old age has not at present disabled me for quiet work of thought and writing. But it has unmanned me for all that deeply moves me. I have neither voice nor nerve for occasions of this kind, and should certainly break down. Else, no tribute could I pay to any parting friend more affectionate and venerating than to your spiritually minded father.

Such well-merited words, uttered by such lips, are a permanent fame.

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